THE SIGNIFICANCE OF MUSIC IN THE LIFE AND RELIGIOUS POETRY OF CHRISTOPHER SMART

PAUL RICHARD GOODSON

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ABSTRACT OF THESIS

This thesis examines the significance of music, musicians and musical thought in the life and religious poetry of Christopher Smart (1722-1771). The first chapter treats of Smart's childhood, Cambridge years and his residence in London up to 1750. A second chapter reviews his artistic relationship with Thomas Arne and William Boyce, with particular reference to the composers' settings of a number of his early poems. A third biographical chapter rounds off Smart's London experiences up to 1757, the year in which chronic religious dementia led to his first prolonged period of confinement. The Seatonian Prize Poems and Hymn, which represent the sum of Smart's pre-asylum religious verse, are discussed in terms of their musical imagery and themes. This study gives way to an inquiry into the poet's most salient theological and musical ideologies, as embodied in his later religious works. Proceeding in chronological sequence, succeeding chapters are allotted to A Song to David, the Psalms volume of 1765, and Smart's two oratorio libretti. In each case, consideration of background, sources and critical reception, prefaces a more detailed analysis of the work's musical disposition and content. A survey of his Parables and Hymns for Children completes the thesis proper. Four appendices deal respectively with David's healing of Saul, the Aeolian harp, the musical settings to Smart's Psalms, and an early poem of disputed authorship.

I declare that this thesis is my own unaided work.

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I acknowledge award of the Tytheridge Travelling Scholarship in Arts from the University of Canterbury, New Zealand, which, together with a University of Edinburgh Postgraduate Studentship, enabled me to undertake this research. From among those scholars and teachers who have guided me in the course of study, three, in particular, have provided immeasurable assistance.

Dr. D.E. Sultana supervised this work from the outset until his retirement from the department at the close of 1982. His meticulous scholarship embodies a standard that I should never myself attain, but furnished an example which I shall always recall with admiration and gratitude. Dr. M.C. Phillips assumed my supervision at a difficult time, and has been unstinting in his encouragement and advice. His expertise in Smart studies enabled me to view this material afresh, and his many acts of personal kindness have given me renewed energy and motivation. It would be inappropriate to detail here what I owe to Professor K.J. Fielding. Suffice to say, had it not been for his timely intervention, discretion and support, it is doubtful that this thesis would have been presented at all.

I am especially grateful to Dr. J.V. Price for his willingness to oversee my progress during Dr. Phillips's sabbatical leave, and for reading over and commenting on, large sections of the thesis. Professor M. Tilmouth of the School of Music kindly consented to review, and subsequently discuss, specifically musical aspects of the dissertation, and proffered many valuable suggestions which

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To remember

Marion Lochhead

with love

PREFACE

The purpose of this thesis is to examine the significance of music, musicians and musical thought in the life and religious works of Christopher Smart (1722-1771). In respect of presentation it seemed expedient to adopt a two-fold measure: firstly, to introduce the literary criticism with three chapters devoted solely to Smart's musical biography; and secondly, to maintain a generally chronological sequence throughout. In accordance with this design, I have curtailed the biographical account at about 1756 — the close of Smart's first decade of London residence — but have continued the narrative thread, where appropriate, in later chapters. Consideration of Smart's oratorios, for instance, includes brief résumés of the careers of John Worgan and Samuel Arnold; the poet's final years are detailed in the discussion of his Parables and Hymns for . . . Children.

An inquiry into Smart's theological and musical ideologies forms a structural and thematic bridge between the two sections of this study. It properly follows examination of the Seatonian verse and Hymn (1750-56), and precedes analysis of the post-asylum poetry. Drawing heavily on Jubilate Agno, it also links the breakdown of 1756/7 with eighteenth-century religious precepts, and introduces concepts that are developed further in succeeding chapters. Inevitably, when dealing with so copious a quantity of versification, many parallels and semblances will emerge, but I have kept cross-referencing to

a minimum, and in the main, confined comparisons to the footnotes.

In matters of style and format I have, in general, followed the directives of the MHRA Style Book, second edition (1978). I have modified these recommendations where appropriate, and also incorporated practices advocated by The MLA Style Sheet, second edition (1970), in the interests of greater lucidity or more helpful annotation. Wherever possible, and particularly in successive quotations from eighteenth-century periodicals, the various sources for a paragraph have been grouped into a single footnote, both to reduce interruptions in the text and to conserve space. It should be noted that aggregated references are given in the order of quotation, which may not necessarily correspond to their chronological sequence. For ease of citation, the musical illustrations have been paginated and interleaved within each chapter, always in proximity to the relevant section of text. Except where reduction of folio or quarto sheets is indicated, the transcripts are reproduced in actual size. To avoid unnecessary cluttering of documentation I have prefaced the narrative with a list of works frequently cited over a number of chapters. For the same reason shortened titles have often been incorporated into first footnote references, although all other pertinent publishing information has been registered. I have not attached footnotes to appendices which are already discursive, but the curtailed information provided in the passages is sufficient to identify the works, all of which are fully recorded in the bibliography. Dates of

publication, however, have always been indicated for purposes of historical perspective. The division of the bibliography by chronology seemed the most practical means of classifying works, which, in respect of genre, overlap to a marked degree. Editions are listed according to the particular text cited, and not to the initial year(s) of publication.

Eccentricities or inconsistencies of spelling and punctuation may be regarded as those of the original texts. I have interpolated comments such as "sic" in brackets sparingly, and only when the apparent incorrectness appeared especially misleading. The usual scholarly conventions with regard to abbreviations, square brackets and transliteration have been observed throughout.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND WORKS FREQUENTLY CITED

Ainsworth, Edward G., and Charles E. Noyes.	Christopher Smart: A Biographical and Critical Study, University of Missouri Studies, XVIII No. 4 (Columbia, 1943).
Blaydes, Sophia B.	Christopher Smart as a Poet of His Time: A Re-appraisal (The Hague, 1966).
Brittain, Robert, ed.	Poems by Christopher Smart (Princeton, 1950).
Burney, Charles.	A General History of Music, 4 vols. (London, 1776-89); cited as History of Music.
Dearnley, Moira.	The Poetry of Christopher Smart (London, 1968).
Devlin, Christopher.	Poor Kit Smart (London, 1961).
DNB	Dictionary of National Biography, 1967-68 rpt.
Grove	The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians, ed. Stanley Sadie, 20 vols. (London, 1980).
Hawkins, John.	A General History of the Science and Practice of Music, 5 vols. (London, 1776); cited as General History.
Johnson, Samuel.	A Dictionary of the English Language, 2 vols. (London, 1755).
Sherbo, Arthur.	Christopher Smart: Scholar of the University (Michigan, 1967).
Smart, Christopher.	Jubilate Agno, ed. W.H. Bond (London, 1954).

INTRODUCTION

Any researcher into Smart studies, on turning to a bibliography of his collected and edited works, is immediately confronted with an anomalous situation. The fanciful notion of "one-poem Smart", a mediocre talent that for one brief moment kindled, blazed and immolated itself in a transfigured vision is, of course, a discredited one. But the summariness with which this claim is dismissed seems scarcely justified by the existing state of Smart scholarship. A Song to David was his only poem to be reprinted over a one-hundred-year period, from 1810 to 1924. And discounting the discovery and subsequent publication of Jubilate Agno, later twentieth-century selections have continued to form themselves around this acknowledged masterpiece. Only the briefest of forays have been made into the vast abyss that represents the remainder of his poetic and prose canon. As Smart's latest co-editor has remarked, few poets of comparable intrinsic merit have had to wait so long for a full assemblage of their works.

Following the first editions (of which only the Seatonian Prize Poems, A Song to David, the Horace prose translation and minor secular works were reprinted in Smart's lifetime), the 1791 volumes gathered together much of his early work, and printed additional odes and fables. The pious disclaimer of his nephew and editor, Rev. Christopher Hunter, is well known, and the collections of Anderson (1794) and Chalmers (1810) adopted similar criteria of choice. The circumstances

surrounding A Song to David are noted elsewhere, and apart from new editions of the prose and verse Horaces and some American reprintings, a large body of Smart's oeuvre was effectively consigned to oblivion. Norman Callan's edition for the Muse's Library of 1949, which did much to revive interest in the poet, also detailed some new attributions, but the texts are unreliable and the notation minimal. Robert Brittain's Poems (1950) includes much fine criticism, and smaller selections by Marcus Walsh (1972, 1979) testify to a continuing interest in Smart. Only with the publication of the Oxford edition, however, will the student of Smart be afforded an account of his complete poetic canon. Given this situation, quotations of Smart's works are taken, in the main, from the first editions; any deviations from this practice are clearly indicated.

Indispensable to any study of Smart is his extraordinary dithyrambic document Jubilate Agno, and here scholars have been more fortunate. Following its initial publication in 1939 by W.K. Stead under the title of Rejoice in the Lamb: A Song from Bedlam, the holograph manuscript was rearranged and re-edited by W.H. Bond in 1954. The invaluable apparatus and annotations compiled by Stead and Bond have been further augmented by Karina Williamson, whose edition of the fragments (1980) constitutes the first in the proposed five-volume set of Smart's poetical works. Notwithstanding the detailed commentaries in the Oxford edition, I have adopted Bond's transcription throughout, for reasons of its fidelity to Smart's

manuscript and absence of textual emendations.

Jubilate Agno is marked by the puns, rhyming associations and neologisms diagnostic of true schizophrenia. These linguistic contrivances are compounded by Smart's preoccupation with introspection, philosophy and obscure religious ideations; features which together indicate the dissolution of coherent thinking and disordering of formal thought processes. Arbitrary connections of this nature which abound in Jubilate Agno, are of obvious interest to the psychologist, and they also form a key to any interpretation of the poet's post-asylum works. I have not embarked upon a uniform analysis, either literary or critical, of Jubilate Agno, but my utilization of its abstruse phraseology is everywhere apparent.

If Smart's poetical works seem randomly treated, identification and classification of his prose pieces has hardly been broached at all. G.J. Gray's bibliography (1903) still represents the most comprehensive attempt at attribution; his investigation into Smart's Midwife contributions is particularly helpful, though some of his conclusions have naturally been modified by more recent studies. In dealing with the vast quantity of periodical literature, especially anonymous and pseudonymous articles, I have only assumed, or implied, Smart's authorship when there is good reason or authority for doing so. Of his remaining prose compositions, extant letters are few in number and of little import, although Roger Lonsdale printed a hitherto unpublished reply from Smart to Charles

Burney in his literary biography of the renowned eighteenth-century musicologist. The contents of this communication suggest a degree of familiarity between the two men not previously verifiable, and also help pinpoint Smart's movements at an unsettled period in his life. The remainder of Smart's letters, six of which are printed in The Review of English Studies (1957), are only of occasional interest and are pathetically overlaid with indications of penury and dashed ambitions.

To turn to a critical bibliography of Smart is to discover a disproportionately small amount of readily available material relative to his extensive output. Again, as has been suggested in the Clarendon Press edition, "serious scholarly investigation of Smart has only just begun". Much of the secondary criticism has focused on the vicissitudes of his London experiences, the time-span of his compositions, and the foundations of his enigmatic scientific and theological assurances. All major studies of Smart agree, however, that music and musical ideas play a prominent part in his biography and poetical works. Given this general concurrence, it is perhaps surprising that so little research has been initiated into his musical background, and into the thematic and structural parallels between music and poetry as evidenced in his mature religious verse.

Of those biographical accounts pertaining to Smart, the references provided by Ainsworth and Noyes in their 1943

monograph are helpful, but neither this critique, nor, more regrettably, the painstaking survey of Arthur Sherbo (1967) is free from factual inconsistencies. It would be unnecessarily pedantic and time-consuming to draw attention to these ambiguities; I have only remarked upon such errors as appear especially pertinent to the topic under discussion. The issue, however, is not one of recapitulation and regularization, but of discovery and development, for there are large areas in Smart's life which have not, to date, been the subject of detailed investigation. The differing measure and emphasis of published critical work, moreover, has prompted a corresponding modification of approach in the course of this thesis.

Little need be added to existing accounts of Smart's early years in Kent and Durham. At Cambridge, however, the poet began to forge friendships with a number of musicians who were to reappear in later years. And here he embarked upon his first dramatic essay, which undoubtedly stimulated his innate taste for theatrical and musical medleys. But London and London society were to dictate the future course of Smart's life. Not for him the comparative retirement of a university college wherein he might systematically pursue his literary interests, but rather, the unpredictable vocation of a Grub Street scribbler, plunged into the whirlpool of publishing ventures and intrigues. In dealing with those London musicians and institutions associated with Smart, I have not hesitated to bring forward incidental information

which can only illuminate the milieu in which he was working. And many of the apparent oddities and juxtapositions of Jubilate Agno become clearer when cited at a particular point in Smart's frenetic career.

The Vauxhall connection and collateral significance of Burney, Boyce and Arne in Smart's life is worthy of close attention. Much of the extant repertoire from the pleasure gardens has been assessed as trite or "conventional", with little attempt to understand the nature of the "conventions" so readily dismissed. For these and other reasons, I have provided brief musical analyses of Arne's and Boyce's settings, also with a view to determining the extent to which they enhance or detract from Smart's texts. By 1751 the young poet was clearly well established in London society, as the impressive list of subscribers to his Poems on Several Occasions (1752) makes plain. And many of these figures were to assume an important role in the fluctuating fortunes of his later years.

In turning to Smart's first religious essays, the dichotomy between his stage activities and these outbursts of devotional fervour is readily apparent. It is hardly surprising, therefore, to discover in the Seatonian Prize Poems and Hymn, thematic elements that anticipate the poet's later obsessional developments in a number of ways. In the early 1750s he had already included himself in nature's song of "grand thanksgiving", referring to the forest warblers as "My fellow subjects of th'eternal King". His Davidic identification is likewise apparent in the magisterial

proclamation of his ordained laureateship, and the impulse towards creative musical utterance is clear as he assumed the instruments of his vocation: "Awake my lute and harp — my self shall wake". Smart, in fact, was moving towards a symphony of praise, a chorus of gratitude in which all matter had a distinctive yet monistic role of enactment: "to live for THEE and THEE alone", as he expressed it in the Hymn.

The watershed in his life and oeuvre was, of course, the impairment of his theological convictions which culminated in intermittent confinement for a period of seven years. In order to understand both the underlying intention and the distinctive imagistic eclecticism of Smart's religious poetry, it is necessary, at this point, to consider the nature of "enthusiasm" and its attendant manifestations. And it is also helpful to recall some of Smart's more distinctive theological beliefs, in order to trace their development and general application within the context of his post-asylum works. Among his musico-religious convictions, the concept of praise forms a recurring motif in all his devotional works, and this theme can be related both to the Jubilate aphorisms, and to mid-eighteenth-century trends.

Of those works published after Smart's second release from confinement in 1763, A Song to David is deserving of special consideration, not only by reason of its pre-eminence, but because of the special critical attention that it has drawn. The harp as accessory to David/Orpheus is a ubiquitous and

salient conceit, both in thematic and structural terms, and I have tried to trace the progression of this image from Smart's earliest works by way of the Jubilate fragments. The Psalms have been dealt with in two chapters; as the poet was working within a convention of scriptural versification, some consideration of his methods of "translation" seemed in order, particularly as they appertain to his reformatory principles. More than any other of his works, the Psalms belong within a tradition, and it is important to recall their antecedents when judging of the methods Smart has employed, and the degree of merit which may be claimed on their behalf.

Again, the generic background is a necessary factor in assessing the success or otherwise of Smart's two oratorio libretti. His achievements here, and in the works for children, are best viewed in relation to formal eighteenth-century requirements. And finally, a word of explanation concerning the proliferation of appendices may not be out of order. The lengthy treatment of David's Cure of Saul was dictated by the complexity of the subject, which combines religious, medical and musical considerations. The prominence of the aeolian harp as a paradigm for unsought creativity in nineteenth-century poetry has been well documented. Its emergence in the previous century has not elicited comparable attention, and Smart's unusual realization of its potentialities is particularly pertinent to this thesis. The short essay on Smart's Psalm Settings is rendered more interesting by the

existence of a MS transcription of the Melodies in the National Library of Scotland, at one time attributed to Smart himself. And a concluding appendix developed from a comparison of single sheet folio copies of the song "When Fanny Blooming Fair", held in the music section of the British Library.

CHAPTER ONE CHILDHOOD, CAMBRIDGE AND EARLY LONDON YEARS

WHEN HOUSE AND LAND IS GONE AND SPENT,
THEN LEARNING IS MOST EXCELLENT. [1]

Christopher Smart was born on 11 April 1722, the only son of Peter Smart, who was steward to the estate of Fairlawn in the parish of Shipbourne, Kent, southern seat of William, Viscount Vane. The family of Christopher's mother Winifred (*née* Griffiths), was originally settled in Radnorshire, Wales; during his confinement the poet was to recount his Welsh ancestry with considerable pride: "For I am the seed of the WELCH WOMAN and speak the truth from my heart" (*Jubilate Agno*, Bl.91). Smart spent his first eleven years in Kent, and again, these early scenes were brought to conscious recollection almost four decades later through the intricate associations of the *Jubilate* fragments.[2]

In 1726 Peter Smart purchased a forty-eight-acre holding, situated largely in the parish of Maidstone, and here his son received his earliest formal education. The curriculum of the local grammar school would certainly have included Latin, in which discipline the young student quickly became proficient. The countryside around Maidstone was fertile

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1 "*A new* SYSTEM *of* CASTLE-BUILDING", Chap. IV, in *Supplement to The Student, Or, The Oxford, and Cambridge Monthly Miscellany*, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1750, 1751), I, 380.

2 See Bl.119, 168.

and well-vegetated, and Smart was to recall the local cultivation vividly, especially in his extended verse essay, The Hop-Garden. His observation of, and feeling for, flowers was undoubtedly nurtured during these formative years, and was to express itself later, not only in secular poems, as "On a Bed of Guernsey Lilies", but also in religious lyrics such as "Hymn XIII: St. Philip and St. James" from the Hymns and Spiritual Songs (1765).

Following the death of his father in 1733 (Peter Smart's property was eventually sold), Christopher and his elder sister were sent north to Durham. Here the children might enjoy association with a number of their father's relatives, as well as the patronage of Henry Vane, cousin to William, who held title to Raby Castle in Staindrop, Co. Durham. Here, too, the schoolboy would have been introduced to musical society, for the city hosted many concerts and entertainments in the mid-1700s. It is likely that he was taken to a number of these events by the Vanes, who always received this son of a former employee with evident cordiality. In 1754 the poet was to acknowledge their support by way of an Ode to Lord Barnard, and many years later he implored mercy on the soul of his patron in Jubilate Agno, D.22. Anne Vane, daughter to Henry (now Lord Barnard) and four years Smart's junior, was his earliest recorded love, and she was never forgotten, even

after her marriage to Charles Hope Weir in 1746.[3]

In addition to Durham's secular attractions, the cathedral itself maintained a notably high ritual throughout the eighteenth century. Smart would certainly have had many an opportunity of observing and participating in its ceremonies, particularly the solemnities associated with Festival Days. The offices and services were conducted in the traditional manner, the psalms sung to chants, and the hymnody not subject to those discreditable reverses that had affected many parish churches in the early 1700s.[4]

Smart was clearly a precocious classical scholar, and one who excelled in both translation and versification. His Latin stanzas entitled "Arion, By a Boy of Fourteen" were preserved from this time, to be printed in the first issue of the Universal Visiter [sic] of 1756. His intellectual promise, moreover, was sufficient to attract the attention of Henry Vane's sister-in-law, the Duchess of Cleveland, who allowed him the sum of £40 per year when he eventually set out for Cambridge: an annuity which the Duke continued after her death in 1742. Smart's schooldays cannot have been unhappy ones, for Durham School is recalled in Jubilate Agno, as is the former Master, Richard Dongworth, for whose "immortal soul" he

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3 Note Jubilate Agno, B2.534; C.104; D.186.

4 See Charles J. Abbey and John H. Overton, The English Church in the Eighteenth Century, 2 vols. (London, 1878), passim.

petitioned about eighteen months after Dongworth's death in February 1761.[5]

Cambridge, where Smart was to remain for the next nine years, offered a host of musical diversions, as well as travelling plays and concerts from London, to which city there was, in any case, a regular coach service. Something of the ambience of the university can be adduced from Thomas Gray's correspondence, which details musical miscellanies of "every other night", and records the performance of imported operas and masses. In one letter Gray addressed his correspondent: "I am glad to find, you are so lapt in Musick at Cambridge", and Smart would undoubtedly have shared in some of these musical bills of fare.[6] The Master of Pembroke Hall, to which Smart was admitted as a sizar in October 1739, was also an enthusiastic amateur musician and inventor. His pursuits and innovations were the talk of the college, and would certainly have kindled the interest of at least some of the students under his jurisdiction.[7]

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5 See C.55; D.28. This section of Fragment D was penned in August or September 1762.

6 Correspondence of Thomas Gray, ed. Paget Toynbee and Leonard Whibley, 3 vols. (Oxford, 1935), II, 766, 622. See also Duncan C. Tovey, ed., The Letters of Thomas Gray, 3 vols. (London, 1900-12), II (1904), 246, n.3.

7 See Correspondence of Gray, III, 957-58, n.3; also Tovey, ed., Letters, III (1912), 138, nn.2,3. On the death of this controversial Master (Dr. Long), Gray commented: "the old Lodge has got rid of all its harpsichords & begins to brighten up" — Correspondence, III, 1164.

At Cambridge, Smart's talent for extemporization and wit was quickly recognized, as was his aptitude for, and excellence in, classical studies. He was made a Dr. Watts Scholar in July 1740, and went on to secure the prestigious Craven Prize in 1742, which accorded him the epithet, "Scholar of the University". These awards were followed by the publication of his Latin translation of Pope's Ode on St. Cecilia's Day in 1743, which, in turn, was succeeded by other poems including "A Secular Ode on the Jubilee at Pembroke College" in this same year. It was around this time — 1742 or 1743 — that Smart began his regular forays to London, probably with the intention of setting up literary and musical connections should he eventually take up permanent residence in the capital.

At Cambridge, however, his academic progress continued apace. Following his accession to the degree of Bachelor of Arts in 1743,[8] he was elected Fellow on 3 July 1745, and later in that year, Praelector in Philosophy and joint Keeper of the Common Chest. He became a Master of Arts on 11 February 1746, and in October assented to the additional title of Praelector of Rhetoric. His reading was wide-ranging, and surviving borrowing slips from the library encompass not only volumes in English, Latin and Greek, but also studies in Hebrew, religion, music and natural history.

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8 Smart's commemorative poem "On Taking a Bachelor's Degree", was printed in The Universal Magazine of Knowledge and Pleasure, VII (September 1750), 135.

There is sufficient evidence in Jubilate Agno to suggest that Smart derived considerable satisfaction from his achievements, and looked upon his college with understandable, if partisan, pride:

> For the two Universities are the Eyes of England.
>
> For Cambridge is the right and the brightest.
>
> For Pembroke Hall was founded more in the Lord than any College in Cambridge.
>
> (B2.617-19)

He also sported a wide circle of friends including "the learned and ingenious Mr. Comber" of Jesus College, who is cited in the "Preface" to his Ode for Musick on Saint Cecilia's Day.[9] In Caius College there were Edward and Jermyn Pratt, whose sister Harriote was to kindle the fire of Smart's amatory muse. And in the same "Preface" to Smart's Ode, the author refers to an unnamed "Gentleman very eminent in the science of Musick, for whom he has a great friendship, and who is, by his good sense and humanity, as much elevated above the generality of mankind, as by his exquisite art he is above most of his profession".[10] In the absence of conclusive documentation, the most likely nominees are John Randall (afterwards Professor of Music and Organist of King's College), who was to take part in Smart's A Trip to Cambridge; Charles Burney, whose friendship dates from a year or two earlier; or,

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9 Carmen Cl. Alexandri Pope in S. Caeciliam Latine Redditum [2nd ed.] . . . [with] an Ode for Musick on Saint Cecilia's Day (Cambridge, 1746), "Preface", [p. 24].

10 Ibid., [p.21]. The final two stanzas of Smart's Ode were printed as "Warlike Music, and Church Music" in R [obert]. Dodsley, comp., The Museum: Or, the Literary and Historical Register, 3 vols. (London, 1746-47), I No. XIII (13 September 1746), 496-98.

should the poet's tribute seem too fulsome, perhaps William Boyce, who had set at least one of his lyrics to music by this date.

Further tribute to Smart's conviviality and to his talents, is provided by surviving accounts of his theatrical farce A Trip to Cambridge, or the Grateful Fair, which was acted in Pembroke Hall in April 1747. In his Annals, Charles Henry Cooper notes that "Only two fragments of this play are extant [the Prologue and a "Soliloquy"]. It is believed that this is the latest instance of a public dramatic performance in any College here".[11] The chronicler provides a synopsis of the action, however, together with a list of dramatis personae. Many of the actors so named were to attain high ecclesiastical office in later life, and several assisted Smart by subscribing to his Poems on Several Occasions (1752), and to his Psalms (1765). Among them were Charles Cooper (Trinity), afterwards Precentor and Archdeacon of Durham; John Gordon (Emmanuel), appointed Precentor of Lincoln; Spencer Madan (Trinity), who succeeded to the bishopric of Peterborough; and Richard Forester (Pembroke), sometime Rector of Passenham. According to Smart's nephew and editor, the musical accompaniment was provided by "Gentlemen of the University";[12] as John Randall (Pembroke, later King's; Mus.B 1744, Mus.D 1756) was among the cast, it is likely that he organized and conducted the orchestra

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11 Annals of Cambridge, 5 vols. (Cambridge, 1842-1908), IV (1852), 257.

12 Rev. Christopher Hunter, ed., The Poems, of the Late Christopher Smart, 2 vols. (Reading, 1791), I, xv; the full account is on pp. xii-xvi.

on this occasion. Richard Stonhewer (Peterhouse) was also drafted into the proceedings; some twenty years later he was to intervene on Smart's behalf by broaching the possibility of a literary commission with the poet's brother-in-law and publisher, Thomas Carnan.

The play itself was apparently a typical undergraduate undertaking: inconsequential and droll of plot, and ebullient (not to say riotous) in performance. Thomas Gray's caustic résumé of the preparations is worth recording:

> . . . in the mean time he [Smart] is amuseing himself with a Comedy of his own Writeing, w^ch he makes all the Boys of his Acquaintance act, & intends to borrow the Zodiack Room, & have it performed publicly. our Friend Lawman, the mad Attorney, is his Copyist; & truly the Author himself is to the full as mad as he. his Piece (he says) is inimitable, true Sterling Wit, & Humour by God; & he can't hear the Prologue without being ready to die with Laughter. he acts five Parts himself, & is only sorry, he can't do all the rest. [13]

But whatever the merit or otherwise of Smart's design, A Trip to Cambridge would have stimulated his taste for staged ventures; a predilection which was to find an outlet in the madcap Midwife enterprises of the following decade.

In the meantime, and notwithstanding the enthusiasm which he brought to bear on secular pursuits, Smart's theology clearly remained orthodox, both in doctrine and in practice. For in October 1747 he was nominated Concionatori

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[13] Gray to Wharton, [17] March 1747, in Correspondence of Gray, I, 274-75.

Coram Praetore oppidano by the Master and Fellows of Pembroke: an honour which entailed delivering a sermon on Michaelmas Day under the directives of the Mayor of Cambridge. He was also appointed to the office of catechist in 1748, which brought him a further financial emolument; it is possible, in fact, that he actually took minor orders. But this was to be Smart's final university post. Whatever measure of contentment he gained through these distinctions was to prove ephemeral, for as his financial insecurity and dissipation became more pronounced, so his restlessness and dissatisfaction with Cambridge life increased. At the close of 1747 his debts amounted to more than £350, and nor did his habitual intoxication, the "one great Source of all this", show any signs of abatement.[14] Though Smart was not to sever his ties with Cambridge completely, he was officially recorded as absent from college in 1749. Plainly he had established a considerable number of London contacts; from this point onwards his destiny was to be determined by London society, by its inhabitants, and by the theatrical and musical opportunities which it offered.

The most celebrated and fully documented of Smart's friendships, and one which was to have far-reaching repercussions in his musical and personal biography, was that forged with the eminent musicologist, composer, teacher and performer, Charles Burney (1726-1814). The precise

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[14] Correspondence of Gray, I, 292.

nature of Smart's activities between the start of 1744 and July 1745 — the date on which he acquired his fellowship — remains conjectural. A retrospective statement of Burney's indicates, however, that he was among Smart's earliest London acquaintances upon the poet's absenting himself from Cambridge for increasingly extended periods in the mid-1740s: "I c^{d} give you a long hist^{y} of my acquaintance, intimacy and correspondence wth . . . Kit Smart, w^{ch} began as early as the year 1744 on my first arrival in London and continued through all the vicissitudes of his fame, insanity, poverty & imprisonment".[15] As the eighteen-year-old Burney, newly apprenticed to Thomas Arne, did not himself arrive in London until September of this year, the relationship with Smart was clearly formed and deepened with some rapidity.

Burney's first full-scale theatrical venture was the short-lived burletta Robin Hood, written to a libretto by Moses Mendez, and produced by Garrick at Drury Lane on 17 December 1750. Robin Hood was succeeded by the extraordinarily successful pantomime Queen Mab, brought out on 26 December of this same year, and which enjoyed over forty further performances during the first season. In an amended form it was still being staged as late as 1775. Following his return to the capital after a nine-year period of residence in King's Lynn, Burney's fortunes rose rapidly.

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15 Letter of 5 May [1806], quoted in Roger Lonsdale, Dr. Charles Burney: A Literary Biography (Oxford, 1965), p. 25.

He was elected Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts in 1764, proceeded to his doctorate in music in 1769, and became a Fellow of the Royal Society in 1773. The breadth of his activities made Burney a catalyst for musical and literary society in general, and, as I shall later suggest, his association with London's most celebrated personages and artists is reflected in many of the names prefaced to Smart's Poems on Several Occasions (1752).

A second testimony to Smart's and Burney's early attachment is contained in Fanny Burney's Memoirs, in which the chronicler notes that around this time — no exact date is given — and "With a different set, [that is, from Arne, Mrs. Cibber, Garrick and James Thomson] and at a different part of the town", the young Burney "formed an intimacy with Kit Smart, the poet".[16] Further reference to their friendship is found in a section detailing Smart's final illness and death: "He left behind him none to whom he was more attached than Dr. Burney, who had been one of his first favourite companions"; and again, in this same volume: "Nor amongst the early friends of Mr. Burney must ever be omitted . . . Kit Smart; whom Mr. Burney always was glad to see, and active to serve".[17] And a passage in her Early Diary (for August 1771) suggests that Fanny's father had, at some time, supplied a detailed narrative of

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16 Madame D'Arblay, Memoirs of Doctor Burney, 3 vols. (London, 1832), I, 17.

17 Ibid., I, 280, 205.

their first London years together: "I never knew him [Smart] in his glory, but ever respected him in his decline, from the fine proofs he had left of his better day, and from the account I have heard of his youth from my father, who was then his intimate companion".[18] As Roger Lonsdale remarks,[19] there are a number of cryptic statements in Dr. Burney's unpublished letters, and in fragments of his memoirs[20] which he did not particularize further. Notwithstanding Fanny's published accounts, her reluctance here to divulge details of Smart's and her father's early years, possibly indicates that she viewed the connection with some distaste.

As to the place of their meeting, several possibilities suggest themselves. Although Burney's principal task on his arrival in London was to assist Arne in the latter's capacity as composer to Drury Lane Theatre, he quickly established other contacts and commissions. His manuscript memoirs detail one such offshoot of his stage activities: "During my connexion with Drury Lane theatre, I became intimately acquainted with Oswald, the Scotish Orpheus, the celebrated performer of old Scots tunes on the Violoncello, and maker of many more, w$^{ch.}$; by his manner of playing them and keeping a Music-shop, on the pavement of St. Martin's church-yard,

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18 The Early Diary of Frances Burney 1768-1778, ed. Annie Raine Ellis, 2 vols. (London, 1889), I, 126.

19 Dr. Charles Burney, p. 25.

20 As, for instance, his insertion, "here Canonbury House — Newbury & Smart" (B.L. Add. MS. 48345, fol. 17), which he did not elaborate on.

turned to good account".[21]

James Oswald (1711-69) was a Scottish-born composer, music publisher and vendor who took up residence in London in 1741. Six years after his arrival he set up an independent publishing firm in St. Martin's Lane off the Strand, establishing a music shop which was evidently a well-known meeting place, not only for musicians and fellow publishers, but also for literati and artists. From these premises he assembled and disseminated popular music for fifteen years, until about 1762. His most celebrated compilation was the fifteen-book Caledonian Pocket Companion, a collection of Scots folk tunes, some with his own variations, which passed through many editions.[22] Among his instrumental pieces are a large number set for the German flute,[23] and his vocal works, "Printed for the Author and Sold at his Musick Shop in S^{t}. Martins Churchyard",[24] encompass hundreds of individual items as well as collections of songs newly performed in the London pleasure

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21 B.L. Add. MS. 48345, fol. 12.

22 The Caledonian Pocket Companion Containing Fifty of the most favourite Scotch Tunes several of them with Variations, all set for the German Flute (London, [c. 1745]).

23 For example, Apollo's Collection, being XII Duettos for Two German Flutes (London, [c. 1750]); James Oswald, Six Divertimenti's, or Solos for a German Flute (London, [c. 1770]).

24 Imprint from "A Favourite Song, ["Woud you obtain the Gentle Fair"] sung . . . at Sadlers Wells" (London, [c. 1750]), s.sh.fol.

gardens.[25] By his assiduous efforts he also succeeded in gaining a Royal Charter for publishing compositions under the title of "The Temple of Apollo", the text of which was printed in many of the works brought out under his jurisdiction:

> Whereas James Oswald . . . hath, by his Petition, humbly represented unto Us, that he has composed and employed others to compose two Operas of Vocal and Instrumental Music, intitled, The Temple of Apollo, in order to be printed and published; And whereas the said Petitioner . . . hath humbly prayed Us to grant him Our Royal Privilege and Licence for the sole Printing, Publishing, Vending and Selling the same . . . We, being willing to give all due Encouragement, to Arts and Sciences, are graciously pleased to condescend to his Request . . .[26]

"The Temple of Apollo", however, was a fictitious society under whose pseudonymous auspices Oswald published his and Burney's compositions, and occasionally those of approved "members", largely, if not wholly, edited by Burney.[27]

In his manuscript memoirs already quoted, Burney further recorded that "The first two or three ballads I ever printed, issued from his [Oswald's] shop".[28] Among these fledgling

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25 Note The Agreeable Choice. A Collection of Songs Sung by Miss Burchell, Miss Stevenson, and M^r^ Lowe at Vaux-Hall-Gardens. Set by M^r^ Worgan (London, [1751]).

26 Imprint dated 23 October 1747, in James Oswald, A Collection of Songs As they are perform'd at the publick Gardens, Book II (London, [c. 1752]), [p.1]. Book III of the same year bears the explicit designation: "Composed for the Society of the Temple of Apollo".

27 As, for instance, Six Songs Compos'd for the Temple of Apollo To which is added A favourite Cantata [Burney, The Despairing Shepherd] (London, [c. 1747]).

28 B.L. Add. MS. 48345, fol. 12.

compositions may be found "Lovely Harriote. A Crambo Song, the Words by Mr. Smart. Set to Musick by Mr. Charles Burny", [sic] and printed for "J. Oswald for the Temple of Apollo". Smart's first biographer notes that "Dr. Burney, the celebrated and learned author of the General History of Music . . . set for Mr. Smart several songs, and has enriched the present collection with some original compositions".[29] If this was so, and indeed, Burney's unpublished memoirs record his receipt of several of Smart's lyrics, "Lovely Harriote" is the only surviving musical score.

Smart's protracted affair with Harriote Pratt, daughter of a long-established Norfolk family, originated in Cambridge at some date between 1742 and 1746. He subsequently addressed several poems to her, the earliest of which, "On seeing Miss H——— P——T in an Apothecary's Shop", was first published anonymously in 1746.[30] Foremost among Harriote's accomplishments was her facility at the keyboard and as a singer; several of Smart's occasional poems praise her musical taste, which, even allowing a lover's hyperbole, must have been more than usually evident:

> You of the Music Common weal,
> Who borrow, beg, compose or steal,
> CANTATA, AIR, or ARIET;
> You'd burn your cumb'rous Works in Score,
> And sing, compose, & play no more,
> If once you heard my Harriote.[31]

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29 Poems, (1791), I, xviii.

30 Dodsley, comp., The Museum, II No. XIV (27 September 1746), 20-21. The text was reprinted in The Midwife: Or, Old Woman's Magazine, 3 vols. (London, [1751]-53), II (1751), No. 1, 34-35.

31 "Lovely Harriote", ll. 25-30, transcribed from B.L. G.308 (36), s.sh.fol.

In "To Miss H——— ———, with some Musick; written by a Poet outragiously in love", the author entreats her to

> Accept these notes — the warbling song begin,
> And with your voice compleat the cherubin;
> Swift with your iv'ry fingers wake the keys,
> And make e'en ——— ———'s desolation please.[32]

She is further invoked in "A Noon-Piece: Or the Mowers at Dinner" as"HARRIOT, sovereign mistress of my heart", and "HARRIOT'S blush and HARRIOT'S eyes" are apostrophized in an "Ode on the fifth of December".[33]

By 1749 the amour was still being vigorously conducted by one party, at least, as is shown by the early epistle from Smart to Charles Burney, which Fanny introduces as follows:

> The letter of the most ancient date that remains in the manuscript epistolary collection of Dr. Burney is from Kit Smart who, fertile alike in Poetry Learning, & Humour, had excited an admiration in young Burney that was soon raised to intimacy, by reciprocated confidence in their juvenile distresses of the Heart. Kit Smart here opens upon his own, with an extreme nay boyish simplicity that seems so little to appertain to a Lover of the Parnassian breed as to render it curious. Smart had so long delayed answering some previous letter, that, in the interval of his silence the Tour to which he alludes had been broken off & the intended Tourist was become the happiest of married men. [34]

The letter, which is printed in Lonsdale's biography, provides a deal of serviceable information, and is worth quoting in full:

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32 The Gentleman's Magazine, XXIV (June 1754), 285. The piece is signed S.

33 The Student, I No. 8 (16 August 1750), 305-7 (p.306); I No. 6 (30 June 1750), 225.

34 B.L. Add. MS. 48345, fol. 46.

Markett Downham Norfolk
y^e 29^th of July 1749.

My dear Charles.

I have left your last unanswered so long that I am under some apprehension, lest it shoud be now too late. You must know I am situated within a mile of my Harriote & Love has robd Friendship of her just dues; but you know the force of the passion too well to be angry at its effects. I condole with you heartily for the loss of your Father, who (I hope) has left behind the cole, which is the most effectual means of consolation. I am as much a stranger as you to what is going on at Vaux Hall, for we are so wrapt up in our own snugness at this part of the kingdom, that we know little what's doing in the rest of the world. There was a great musical crash at Cambridge, which was greatly admired, but I was not there, being much better pleased with hearing my Harriote on her spinnet & organ at her ancient mansion. —— If you are still in the Kingdom I beg the favour of an immediate line or two, but if you are not, I hope even the Ocean will not, nay, he shall not cut off our correspondence & friendship ——

Y^rs most inseparably C.Smart.[35]

Fanny's annotations to a partial transcript of this letter are erroneous, in that she confuses Harriote with Anna Maria Carnan, Smart's future wife. Nevertheless, her comments are of interest, chiefly in demonstrating that Smart was in the habit of circulating manuscript copies of his poems, certainly to Charles Burney, and probably to other musicians and literati as well.

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35 Letter in Houghton Library, Harvard; quoted in Dr. Charles Burney, p.26.

> The Harriote here mentioned was the Daughter of Mr. Newbury, universally known from his connexion with the famous Dr. James. Harriote was an Auburn Haired Beauty, & Smart afterwards celebrated her in a song called The Lass with the Golden Locks, in which, speaking of her bright tresses, he says 'Tis the taste of the ancients, 'tis Classical Hair — And another song, which his friend Burney set to music for him, he begins with this spirited stanza
>
> Grt. phebus in his vast career
> that forms the selfsucceeding year
> [Illegible] in his
> [Illegible]
> [Illegible]
> As dear delicious Harriot.
>
> The following Birthday Ode, which was given in MS to young Burney celebrates the same lady. Hail, Eldest of the [page finishes]

And in a succeeding passage Fanny again refers to "A burlesque or Parody, or imitation of the Ode of Horace . . . here printed from a MS copy in the Author's own hand, which during their youthful intimacy was given to young Burney by Mr. Smart".[36]

Some additional conclusions may be drawn from the letter. Certainly by 1749 there was a high degree of familiarity between the twenty-seven-year-old poet, and the twenty-three-year-old aspiring musicologist. Nothing else would explain Smart's flippant reference to the death of Burney's father; to indulge in such badinage with impunity, he must have known of the younger man's unsettled upbringing, and been confidant to his deepest ambitions. This letter also discloses, by implication, the reason why Burney solicited subscriptions to Smart's Poems On Several Occasions (1752) with some zeal; for there was clearly reciprocal interest, not only in matters of the heart, but also in the friends' respective careers. Burney's enquiry about

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[36] B.L. Add. MS.48345, fols. 47, 47^{v}.

Vauxhall indicates that correspondent and recipient were frequent visitors to the Gardens; yet Smart's reference to the Installation of the Duke of Newcastle at Cambridge, shows that he had not lost contact with his university entirely. And lastly, what we know of Harriote's gifts from Smart's poetic tributes, is here confirmed by his response to her music-making.

Burney's setting of "Lovely Harriote" is assigned to the year 1750, both by Percy A. Scholes in his critical biography of the musicologist,[37] and (conjecturally) in the British Library catalogues which record the only extant copy of the song.[38] It is conceivable, however, that the song was penned some years earlier from a manuscript copy given by Smart to the composer at a time when the poet's "long and unsuccessful passion"[39] for Harriote was developing apace. Despite the cumbersome and inelegant rhyme scheme demanded by the sportive crambo form, Burney probably intended to advance Smart's suit by providing a graceful musical setting. The explicit desideratum of the final stanza cannot have left any doubts concerning the nature of Smart's ultimate hopes for the youthful intrigue. Moreover,

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37 The Great Dr. Burney, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1948), II, 342. Arthur Sherbo's standard biography, Christopher Smart: Scholar of the University, does not mention Burney's setting.

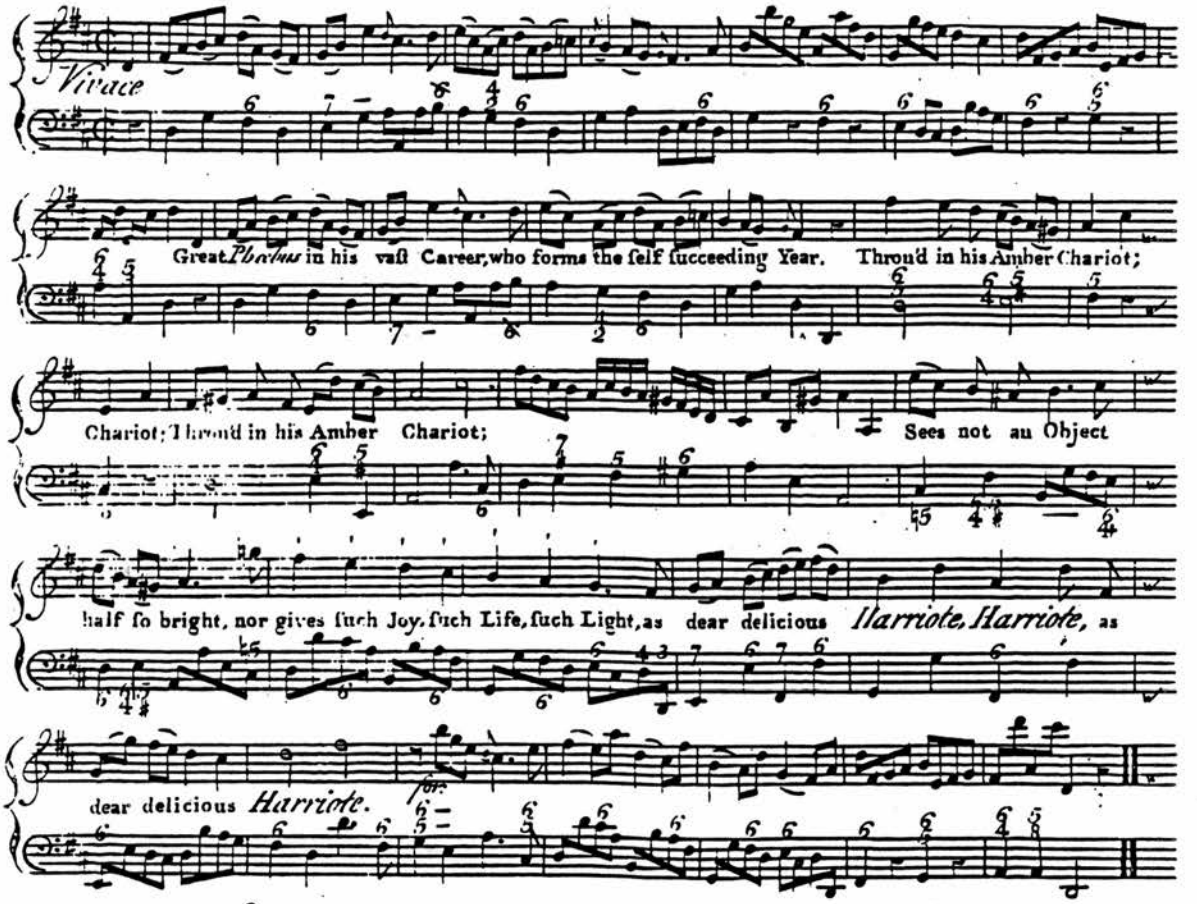
38 "Lovely Harriote" is bound into a volume of miscellaneous airs and songs entitled Collection of English Ballads, Vol. III. G-H, as s.sh. fol.36. See Illus. I.

39 Poems (1791), I, xxxiii. That Smart had delivered a number of poems in MS to Burney is substantiated by Fanny's remarks in B.L. Add. MS. 48345, fol. 47^{r-v}.

44

Lovely By Authority G. R. Harriote

A Crambo Song, the Words by Mr. Smart. Set to Musick by Mr. Charles Burny



2

Pedants of dull phlegmatic Turns,
Whoſe Pulſe not beats, whoſe Blood not burns,
Read Malebranche, Boyle & Marriote;
I ſcorn their Philoſophic Strife,
And ſtudy Nature from the Life,
(Where moſt ſhe ſhines) in *Harriote*.

3

When ſhe admits another Wooer,
I rave like Shakeſpear's jealous Moor,
And am as raging Barry hot
True virtuous lovely was his Dove,
But Virtue Beauty Truth and Love,
Are other Names for *Harriote*.

4

Ye factious Members who oppoſe,
And tire both Houſes with your Proſe,
Tho' never can ye carry ought;
You might command the Nations Senſe,
And without Bribery convince,
Had ye the Voice of *Harriote*.

5

You of the Muſic Common weal,
Who borrow, beg, compoſe or ſteal,
CANTATA, AIR, or ARIET;
You'd burn your cumbrous Works in Score,
And ſing, compoſe, & play no more,
If once you heard my *Harriote*.

6

Were there a Wretch who durſt Eſſay,
Such wondrous ſweetneſs to betray
I'd call him an ISCARIOTE;
But her Eén Satyrs can't annoy,
So ſtrictly chaſte, but kindly Coy,
Is fair Angelic *Harriote*.

7

While Sultans, Emperors & Kings,
(Mean Appetite of earthly Things,)
In all the Waſte of War riot;
Love's ſofter Duel be my Aim,
Praiſe, Honour, Glory, Conqueſt, Fame,
Are center'd all in *Harriote*.

8

I ſwear by HYMEN & the Pow'rs
That haunt Love's ever bluſhing Bow'rs
So ſweet a Nymph to Marry ought;
Then may I hug her ſilken Yoke,
And give the laſt the final Stroke,
T'accompliſh lovely *Harriote*.

Printed for J. Oswald for the Temple of Apollo

Illus. I. Burney, "Lovely Harriote" [1750?], s.sh.fol. [reduced]. B.L. G.308(36).

the text of the song differs from that printed in The Midwife (1751), which suggests at least modification of the original words, if not the sometime existence of two copies of the ballad.[40]

Burney's strophic treatment of Smart's lyric follows the accepted printed convention of melody line ranged over a figured bass. The verse proper is preceded by an eight-bar introduction opening and closing in the tonic key of D. The first three lines of each stanza enact the standard harmonic progression from tonic to dominant, and a two-bar "symphonie" at the half verse reinforces the A major tonality. Following a brief modulation to the relative minor, a descending melodic scale signals a return to the home key, with a five-bar coda rounding off the whole. Harmonically and structurally, then, "Lovely Harriote" is quite conventional, notwithstanding some idiosyncratic touches such as the rising major third on "Harriote", or the arpeggiated right-hand figure in bars 5 and 6 which becomes the bass three lines further on. Burney, however, places the expressive, rhythmic and melodic emphasis firmly on to the reiterated "Harriote". The effect is both pleasing and disconcerting, for though the object of Smart's infatuation is thus distinguished, equal prominence is attached to his anticipatory correspondent rhymes. In the case of the more contrived coinages ("Barry hot", "War riot") the lover's hyperbole is reduced to mere bathos.

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40 "Lovely Harriote. A Crambo Song by Mrs. Midnight's Nephew", in The Midwife, II No. 1, 31-33.

Whatever the reception of Burney and Smart's early artistic venture, it remains the case that Oswald may have provided the link between the two friends, even if 1744/45 is accepted as the date of their first encounter. But as Oswald's music publishing business was not established until 1747, composer and poet could not have actually met on his premises as Roger Lonsdale conjectures.[41] Nevertheless, that Oswald played a significant part in Smart's first years of London residence is indisputable. Not only did the book-seller enjoy a wide acquaintance with those librettists and musicians currently in favour at Vauxhall Gardens, but as will subsequently be seen, he composed at least one work which enjoyed a considerable measure of success at performances of Smart's Old Woman's Oratory.

An introduction between Smart and Burney could also have taken place in one of the many coffee houses or taverns which were recognized centres of musical activity in eighteenth-century London. Such an overture in a less than salubrious milieu would account both for Fanny's reticence about the new "set" in which Burney found himself, and for her failure to elaborate on the genesis of their initial encounter. Not all the taverns, however, were low establishments in which liquor and musical farragos were freely intermixed. Two, at least — the Castle and the Swan — boasted subscription concerts which employed competent

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41 Dr. Charles Burney, p.25.

Italian and English performers and which attracted a largely middle-class clientèle. The Castle Tavern, in fact, published a series of thirty-four sober directives regulating and ordering the conduct of members of the attached musical society.[42] The elected president, for instance, "shall appoint the Musick to be performed each Night; shall keep the Keys of the Musical Books and Instruments, and be at the Concert before Six of the Clock. . . ".[43] New member-performers had to be approved by a general gathering before being permitted to appear at the concerts which were held every Monday between Michaelmas and Lady-day, beginning at 7pm. Burney himself had become a regular performer at the King's Arms Tavern following the removal there of a series of fashionable concerts from the Swan Tavern in 1748, and an advertisement in The General Advertiser of 21 November 1750 announced his forthcoming appearance as harpsichord soloist at the Devil Tavern. And it was at the Devil Tavern that Smart staged his Old Woman's Oratory, alternating between this venue and the New Theatre in the Haymarket in the years following the inaugural presentation of December 1751.

A third possibility, and one not necessarily at variance with the Oswald connection, is that Smart and Burney were first

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42 The By-Laws of the Musical Society at the Castle-Tavern, in Pater-Noster Row ([London, 1731]).

43 Ibid., p.4, reg. VI. Advertisements for the Castle Tavern Musical Society appeared regularly in The General Advertiser throughout the mid-1700s.

introduced at Vauxhall Gardens. As a number of Smart's lyrics were performed there, and as many of the subscribers to his Poems on Several Occasions (1752) served there in a musical, literary or administrative capacity, some account of the nature and importance of the Spring Gardens is desirable.

Vauxhall was the most renowned and illustrious of the eighteenth-century pleasure gardens, and in its earliest realization as the Spring Gardens, was opened shortly after the Restoration, probably in 1661. In 1728 the lease was purchased by Jonathan Tyers (d. 1767) who subsequently bought up large areas of the estate (about twelve acres in all) and eventually assumed full proprietorship. Under his direction Vauxhall expanded in scale and musical range and reached its apogee during the mid-1700s.[44] Tyers opened his first season in 1729 with a phenomenally popular entertainment termed a Ridotto al Fresco, which was repeated several times during this and succeeding seasons. Mention is made of his innovations in an issue of The Student (1751), in which the editors note: "We have just receiv'd a letter from JONATHAN TYERS of Vaux-Hall, Esq; desiring that his name may be immortaliz'd (with Mr. ASHLEY'S) as the original projector of Public Gardens, or Ridottos al Frescos, in

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44 For background to Vauxhall, see Warwick Wroth, The London Pleasure Gardens of the Eighteenth Century (London, 1896), esp. pp. 290-305. There is, in the B.L., a comprehensive collection of manuscripts, historical documents, memoranda, poems and advertisements pertaining to Vauxhall, assembled by J.H. Burn, purchased (complete) by the B.M. in 1874, and catalogued under the pressmark Cup. 401.k.7.

this Kingdom".[45] It is highly likely that Tyers and Smart were professionally acquainted. If The Student allowed Smart the opportunity to record Tyers' achievement, no less could the impresario reciprocate in kind, for he is listed among the subscribers to Smart's Poems on Several Occasions which appeared the following year.

Tyers was further credited for his "taste, liberality, and spirit in supporting and ornamenting this elegant place of amusement with . . . an excellent band of music; an orchestra in the form of a temple in the open air, with an organ equal in size and workmanship to many of the most noble instruments of that kind in our churches".[46] He was fortunate, moreover, to enjoy the patronage of Frederick Prince of Wales, who had attended the initiatory Ridotto and who revisited the Gardens frequently during the following two decades. An account of 1751 notes that His Royal Highness was often to be glimpsed promenading in the salon, "attended by many distinguish'd Persons of both Sexes, sometimes supping in it, and closing the Night with Country Dances".[47]

Additional evidence of Smart's active involvement at Vauxhall may be inferred from the solemnities surrounding Frederick's death in this same year, for among the many poetic

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45 The Student, II (1751), No. 9, 341.

46 Abraham Rees, The Cyclopaedia, 39 vols. (London, 1819), XXXVI, sig. 3Q4[r], s.v. Tyers, Jonathan.

47 A Sketch of the Spring-Gardens, Vaux-Hall. In a Letter to a Noble Lord (London, [1750?]) [B.L.], p.5. This account can be dated precisely as 1751; it was advertised in the list of new publications in The Gentleman's Magazine for July of that year — see Vol. XXI, 335, [Item] 13.

tributes may be found: "A Solemn Dirge, Sacred to the Memory of His Royal Highness Frederic Prince of Wales, As it was Sung by Mr Lowe, Miss Burchell, and others, at Vaux-Hall. Written by Mr Smart. The Music compos'd by Mr Worgan".[48] Smart's eulogy was duly advertised in The Gentleman's Magazine as "[Item] 32. A solemn dirge on ditto, ["a late mournful occasion"] as it is sung at Vaux-Hall. By Mr Smart".[49] The reviewer notes that "All the poetical pieces . . . lament the father at the beginning, and at the end rejoice in the son", which accords with Smart's dedication to the new Prince Regent: "To His Royal Highness Prince George, The following little Poem, On the much lamented Death of his Father, is humbly inscribed by the Author" [p.3].[50] The magazine appraisal concludes by citing two stanzas which "may serve not only as an epitome of this piece but most of all the rest":

> Father! Master! Husband! Brother!
> Every blessed tender name!
> Ye must die — till such another,
> Call you back to life and fame.
>
> Such another? — We possess him,
> To revive his father's fame,
> Honour, glory, wisdom, bless him,
> Not another, but the same.

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48 The 8-page Dirge was printed for Thomas Carnan and published by John Newbery (Smart's future father-in-law). The connection with Worgan was to prove one of long standing, for he set Smart's oratorio Hannah 13 years later in 1764. See Chapter 9.

49 The Gentleman's Magazine, XXI (April 1751), 190. For a list of occasional orations, complaints, monodies, threnodies, mourning pieces, elegiac pastorals and pastoral elegies, see this issue (loc. cit.) and that of March (1751), p. 143.

50 Smart's Dirge was also advertised in The London Magazine, XX (April 1751), 192, together with other lugubrious effusions typified by "Britain in Tears". Excerpts were printed in the issue for May (1751), pp. 229-30.

In 1738, and at his own expense, Tyers commissioned a statue of Handel from the French-born sculptor Louis François Roubiliac (c.1705-62), who had settled permanently in London in 1732. Roubiliac's depiction of Handel in the guise of Orpheus was an arresting and much-admired feature of Vauxhall, and established his reputation as an artist in the rococo style. The marble statue also claimed the attention of poets who sought to immortalize the excellence of its creator's art in verse:

> Drawn by the fame of these embow'r'd retreats,
> See Orpheus rising from th'elysian seats!
> Lost to th'admiring world three thousand years,
> Beneath great Handel's form he re-appears.[51]

And few writers discounted the timely circumstances of this meeting of French- and German-born emigrants, to discover in British soil a fertile medium for the transplantation and nurture of genius:

> See Handel, careless of a foreign fame,
> Fix on our shore, and boast a Briton's name:
> While, plac'd marmoric in the vocal grove,
> He guides the measures listening throngs approve.[52]

Roubiliac's later works included busts of Garrick and Tyers himself, as well as of leading university figures such as Newton (in 1755) and other scholars whose images now grace Trinity College Library, Cambridge. His name may be found in the list of subscribers to Smart's Poems On Several Occasions

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51 A Description of Vaux-Hall Gardens (London, 1762), p.36.

52 "On our late TASTE in MUSICK" by a Gentleman of OXFORD, in The Gentleman's Magazine, X (October 1740), 520.

(1752), probably as a result of Tyers' good offices.[53] But as the sculptor rented a studio in St. Martin's Lane between 1740 and 1750, it is conceivable that Smart met him there, or at Slaughter's coffee house which Roubiliac was known to frequent, and which was a recognized meeting place for aspiring men of letters.

Smart perhaps had few opportunities of repaying Roubiliac's interest and financial support. Some ten years later, however, now clothed in the crepuscular mantle of Mrs. Mary Midnight, he singled out the artist in his "Loyal Oration" commemorating the Coronation of King George III on September 1761: "While we have a Roubiliac . . . can we any longer gaze with Wonder on an useless Bust . . .".[54]

The visual delights of Vauxhall were stunning, as period engravings of the exquisitely manicured grounds clearly reveal; the musical attractions were scarcely less beguiling, if contemporary accounts are correspondingly accurate. The positioning of the performers seems to have been dictated by the state of the elements, and in fine weather they were ranged in the grove. This square consisted of "lofty Trees, in the Center of which stands a grand ORGAN: and, joining to

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53 Smart was to remember the proprietor with gratitude a decade later: "God be gracious to Jonathan Tyers his family and to all the people at Vaux Hall" (Jubilate Agno, B2.455). This part of the work was penned in April or May 1760. See also D.144, written towards the end of 1762.

54 Mrs. Midnight's Orations; and Other Select Pieces; As they were spoken at the Oratory in the Hay-Market, London (London, 1763), p.45.

it, an Edifice term'd the musical Temple, raised in a pleasing Style".[55] (Eighteenth-century prints reveal it as an impressively domed, neo-Gothic structure.) As one anonymous observer further delineated it: "At the upper extremity of this orchestra, a very fine organ is erected, and at the foot of it are the seats and desks for the musicians, placed in a semi-circular form, leaving a vacancy at the front for the vocal performers".[56] If, on the other hand, the weather was inclement, all performances took place in a "great room or rotunda . . . . Within this room on the left hand is the orchestra, which is inclosed with a balustrade . . . at the extremity, is the organ, and before it are placed [semi-circularly] the desks for the musical performers".[57]

From either station the items were executed "by a select band of the best vocal and instrumental [musicians]",[58] for in addition to his instrumental improvements, Tyers had added vocal music, possibly in 1745.[59] The musical bill of fare

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55 Sketch of Vaux-Hall, p.13.

56 Description of Vaux-Hall, p.8.

57 Ibid., pp. 20-21. See also Sketch of Vaux-Hall, pp. 11-12.

58 Sketch of Vaux-Hall, p.13.

59 Burney in his History of Music (IV (1789), 667) gives 1745 as the date for the introduction of vocal items; a performance of Handel's Coronation Anthem ["God save the King" from Zadok the Priest] is recorded at Vauxhall, however, on 19 August 1738. See Otto Erich Deutsch, Handel: A Documentary Biography (London, 1955), p.465.

which was advertised regularly in The London Daily Post as "Proposals for the Entertainment of the Spring-Gardens" comprised sixteen items, opening "with instrumental music at six o'clock, which having continued about half an hour, the company are entertained with a song: and in this manner several other songs are performed with sonatas or concertos between each, till the close of the entertainment which is generally about ten o'clock".[60] The evening always concluded in fine style with "a duet or trio, accompanied with a chorus",[61] for the provision of which, Handel's oratorios were mercilessly plundered.

There is no doubting the enthusiasm with which these musical offerings were received. One poet, at least, had the compound distinction of seeing his ode praising the delights of the Gardens, itself set and performed at the much-belauded venue. In its descriptive passages Lockman's poem seems little more than a versified set of architectural specifications:

> See, a grand Pavilion yonder,
> Rising near embow'ring shades;
> There a Temple strikes with wonder,
> In full view of colonnades.

But there were plenty who would echo his account of the aural attractions of Vauxhall:

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60 Description of Vaux-Hall, loc. cit.

61 Ibid., p.9.

> Hark! what Heav'nly Notes descending
> Break upon the list'ning Ear,
> Musick all its Graces lending,
> O, 'tis Extasy to hear! [62]

A "Young Gentleman" rehearsed the familiar claims for music's potency by way of an extended exposition of l'anatomie d'amour:

> There Musick's Silver Sound enchants the Ear,
> Calms all our Passions, and dispels all Fear;
> Far from her Voice pale Hatred ever flies,
> And dreadful Discord in her Presence dies;
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Enkindles in our Hearts the Blaze of Love,
> And gives a Symptom of the Joys above; [63]

And in the same year the Supplement to the Universal Magazine printed words and music of the anonymous "Green-wood-hall":

> Whilst music, never cloying,
> As sky-larks sweet, I hear:
> The sounds I'm still enjoying;
> They'll always sooth my ear. [64]

Some artists were particularly singled out, as Mrs. Arne:

"Mark silence at the voice of Arne confess'd,/Soft as the sweet

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62 Words transcribed from William Boyce,"The Pleasures of Spring Gardens, Vauxhall",arr. Norman Franklin, Oxford Solo Songs (Oxford, 1956). The song was first published as "The Pleasures of ye Spring Gardens Vaux-hall. The Words by Mr. Lockman. Set by Mr. Boyce" (London, [1735?]), s.sh.fol.

63 Vaux-Hall. A Poem. By a Young Gentleman (Dublin, 1750), pp. 8-9. See also The London Magazine, X (July 1741), 340-41.

64 "Green-wood-hall: or, Robin's Description . . . of the Pleasures of Spring-Gardens. Made to a favourite Gavot, from an Organ Concerto, composed by Mr. Gladwin, for Vauxhall", Supplement to the Universal Magazine, Vol. VI (1750), 327. Interestingly, "Green-wood-hall" started life as "Colin's Description . . . " in The Gentleman's Magazine, XII (August 1742), 440, and appeared in this form as a s.sh.fol. in [1745?]. There were further editions between 1742 and the Universal Magazine printing of 1750.

inchantress rules the breast",[65] or Miss Burchell, whose warblings formed the inspiration for "Arethusa's" muse.[66] Perhaps the most extraordinary compliment to the influence and renown of the pleasure gardens is that contained in a satirical twelve-page work, the title page of which announces its intention and proclaims its biblical source:

> Woe unto thee, Ranelagh! Woe unto thee, Vaux-hall! . . . And Woe! Woe! Woe! to the Frequenters thereof!

The musical diversions are inveighed against in a somewhat lame parody of the more vigorous prose of the Book of Revelation:

> 25. Moreover at the Sound of the Organ my Soul danced for Joy; and the Man's Finger, that played upon the Organ, was a cunning Finger.
>
> 26. And there was great Harmony betwixt the Sound of the Organ, and the Sound of the other Instruments . . .
>
> 27. Albeit there was not heard the Voice of Singing-men, or of Singing-women, and the Music lacked Interpretation.[67]

But needless to say, such an attack was exceptional; both Vauxhall, and later Ranelagh — which opened in 1742 and whose entrance fee always included "a good concert by the best performers in London"[68] — were accorded nothing but acclaim by their numerous gratified patrons.

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65 "On our late TASTE in MUSICK", loc. cit.

66 "On Miss Burchell's singing, Sweet Bird at Vauxhall" [n.d.], in J.H. Burn, [Historical Collection], p.179.

67 The Evening Lessons. Being the First and Second Chapters of the Book of Entertainments (London, 1742), p.5.

68 Rees, Cyclopaedia, XXIX, sig. 3F2^{r}, s.v. Ranelagh.

It is evident that Tyers was committed to maintaining the pre-eminence of Vauxhall as a place of musical recreation. Not only did he recruit many of the leading singers of his day to perform there — notably Mrs. Arne, Thomas Lowe and the elder Reinhold — but he also engaged the talents of London's foremost composers. Since there was, as Burney remarks, "a great scarcity of lyric poets" at this time,[69] composers, in turn, were quick to seize upon the work of any itinerant versifiers. So it was that Smart, together with Richart Rolt, Bonnell Thornton, John Lockman and others, had the pleasure of hearing some of his earliest lyrics sung at Vauxhall and published soon after in one or other of the ubiquitous London magazines. From among those musicians associated with Smart, however, two are of particular importance, both in terms of their relationship with the poet, and by the intrinsic merit of their compositions. By 1750, Thomas Arne and William Boyce had provided between them, at least seven settings of poems by Smart. It is appropriate, now, to examine this vocal legacy in some detail, primarily by way of such musical analysis as defines more closely the nature of Arne's and Boyce's achievements.

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69 History of Music, IV, 674n.k. Arne penned some of his own libretti — usually of indifferent quality.

CHAPTER TWO SMART, ARNE AND BOYCE

> Go on, and let not music be any longer reckoned a foreign accomplishment. An ENGLISHMAN encouraged is invincible, as well in arts as in arms. [1]

Thomas Augustine Arne (1710-1778) was the most gifted and prolific English theatre composer of his age.[2] Following a period of domicile in Dublin from June 1742 to September 1744, he was, on his return to London, immediately engaged by Tyers to provide new ballads, duets, dialogues and arias for the Vauxhall concerts. His success here, and later at Ranelagh and Marylebone, established his supremacy in London, and he is credited with over two hundred items and twenty collections of songs which were published, and "soon after circulated throughout the kingdom, to the great improvement of our national taste".[3] Such was the extent of his influence, that the introduction of vocal music at Vauxhall with Arne as its foremost practitioner, may be said to have heralded the revival of popular English song in the eighteenth century, and established melodiousness and naturalness

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1 "From Mr. Purcel, [sic] to Dr. Boyce", in The Universal Visiter, [sic] and Memorialist (London, [1757]), p.24.

2 In his History of Music Burney asserts that of the 150 staged performances at Covent Garden and Drury Lane from about 1730 to 1770, 30, at least, were compositions of Arne; see IV (1789), 675.

3 Abraham Rees, The Cyclopaedia, 39 vols. (London, 1819), XXXVI, sig. 3Q4^{r}, s.v. Tyers, Jonathan. For a similar estimation see Burney, IV, 673.

of line as chief characteristics of the lyric genre.

A glance through any one of Arne's assemblages of vocal works reveals the breadth, topicality and distinction of his art:[4] there are songs in the pastoral and rustic conventions,[5] in patriotic[6] or nautical strain,[7] or in "Scottish" idiom,[8] as well as glees, cantatas[9] and masques.[10] There are also pieces composed expressly for pantomimes — the enervated descendants of Italian commedia dell'arte — or as incidental music to comic operas,[11] plays[12] and musical

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4 See The Agreeable Musical Choice. A Favourite Collection of English Songs Sung at the Publick Gardens, 4 bks. (London, [1752-57]); or, An Entire New Collection of English Songs and a Cantata . . . sung . . . at Vaux-Hall, Ranelagh, and Marybon-Gardens, 4 bks. (London, [1746-52]).

5 As "Spring an Ode. Set by D^r Arne" ([London, 1763]), s.sh.fol.; or "Lotharia. Set by Mr. Arne" ([London, c.1755]), s.sh.fol.

6 The masque Alfred boasts Arne's most universally acclaimed song: "Rule Britannia", which was published as a s.sh.fol. in [1755?].

7 Among the most popular of Arne's songs were those in Thomas and Sally, or the Sailor's Return (London, 1761).

8 As "Pitty Paty. Sung by M^r Lowe at Marybon Gardens. A Favourite Scotch Song as alter'd from the Tune of the Yellow-hair'd Laddie" (London, [1750]); also in The Gentleman's Magazine, XXI (February 1751), 83.

9 A typical essay is Cymon and Iphigenia A Cantata. Set by M^r Arne & Sung by M^r Lowe at Vaux Hall Gardens (London, [c. 1760]). This Arcadian romance tells of base Cymon's wooing of the fair Iphigenia, who at first dismissive, gradually recognizes in her lover's voice and air the ennobling effects of love, and eventually accepts his suit.

10 The Musick in the Masque of Comus . . . As it was Perform'd at the THEATRE-ROYAL in Drury-Lane (London, [1740?]). In this version Comus was first produced at Drury Lane on 4 March 1738.

11 Note, for instance, The Cooper, A Comic Opera as it is Performed at the Theatre Royal in the Hay-Market (London, [1772]).

12 For example, The Songs in As You Like It . . . the Rival Queens . . . Twelfth Night . . . and the Tender Husband, As Sung by Mr. Lowe and Mrs. Clive, at the Theatre-Royal, in Drury Lane (London, [c.1750]). The title page notes, as was common practice, that "all the SONGS which are not in proper Keys for the German Flute, are transpos'd, with the Bass to them, at the End of the Book".

miscellanies,[13] many of which were penned solely to meet the commercial demands of theatrical entrepreneurs. It is in the individual songs, often issued as single sheet folios, that the most original facets of Arne's style can be discerned. Many of these items are known only by the name of the artist who performed them; to fulfil popular demand they were printed singly and in haste, usually without the concurrence of either composer or librettist, and soon after pirated by one or other of the literary journals.[14]

The circumstances by which Arne and Smart became acquainted are not documented, though they are almost certainly linked with the versatile young Burney who assisted his master professionally at the pleasure gardens as well as in the Drury Lane orchestra, to which Arne had been appointed leader in 1746. Smart himself clearly associated Burney with the Arnes, for one of his last-penned Jubilate fragments of December 1762 conjoins the two

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13 An early work in this category is An Hospital For Fools. A Dramatic Fable. As it is Acted at the Theatre-Royal (London, 1739).

14 This circumstance did not apply only to Arne's lyrics. See, for instance, in The London Magazine: "A New Song, Sung by Mr. Lowe, at Vaux-Hall Gardens" (XVIII (July 1749), 332); "Jockey and Jenny. A New Song. Sung by Mr. Lowe and Mrs. Arne at Vaux-Hall" (XIX (August 1750), 372-73); "A New Song. Sung by Miss Stevenson, at Vauxhall Gardens" (XVIII (August 1749), 378); "Damon to Caelia. A New Song. Sung by Mr. Lowe at Marybon Gardens" (XIX (October 1750), 469). Bound collections were frequently distinguished in this same manner; as, The New Songs Sung by Mrs. Vincent and Mr. Squibb, at Marybone Gardens. With a Song sung by Miss Wearman, at Vaux-hall (London, [c.1775]).

names through oblique reference to their mutual involvement in the lively Vauxhall enterprises of a decade earlier: "Let Arne, house of Arne rejoice with The Jay of Bengal. God be gracious to Arne his wife to Michael & Charles Burney" (D.196). Michael Arne had made his stage debut as early as 1750, probably in the Haymarket, and from this point on enjoyed a thriving career, firstly as a singer and instrumentalist at Vauxhall, Marylebone, Drury Lane and Covent Garden, and latterly as a composer of theatre music and songs for the pleasure gardens.[15]

It seems, however, that the collaboration of the elder Arne and Smart was broached as early as 1745, and not in 1750 or 1751 as some commentators have assumed. For arguably Arne's most enduring achievement is a fourteen-book collection of English songs, the first four volumes of which are entitled Vocal Melody, and which began to appear in 1746. Book II of this anthology[16] includes two settings of lyrics by Smart with librettos that display notable variants from those printed in later publications, and which also predate the texts adopted by Callan for his collected edition of 1949.[17]

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15 Michael Arne composed a number of songs in the "Scottish" idiom which achieved a great measure of popularity, as "The Highland Laddie. Set by Maſ Arne and Sung by Mſ Mattocks at the Theatre Rl. in Drury Lane" ([London, 1755?]).

16 Vocal Melody [1746-52.] Book II. An Entire New Collection of English Songs and a Cantata Compos'd by Mr. Arne. Sung by Mr. Beard, Mr. Lowe and Miss Falkner, at Vaux-Hall, Ranelagh, and Marybon-Gardens (London, [c. 1747]).

17 Norman Callan, ed., The Collected Poems of Christopher Smart, The Muse's Library, 2 vols. (London, 1949).

"The Distress'd Maid" is arranged for two violins, continuo and voice, and includes, as was usual, a synthesis of the upper violin part and melody line transposed for a flute obbligato.[18] Arne's lyrical strophic setting displays many of the characteristics of songs written explicitly for the pleasure gardens: a genre which provided musical diversion for a far wider social circle than that represented by the habitués of opera houses. The rhythmic and syllabic crispness, allied with widespread use of primary triads (generally in root position or first inversion), allow the humorous nature of Smart's words their full impact. Similarly, the square-cut phrasing and verbal accentuation are collateral reminders that the songs were intended primarily for open air performance rather than for private music-making. Arne's expressive use of diminished 7th chords on the third line of each stanza, and the repetition of the final phrase which clinches the poetic and musical arguments, save the verses from harmonic and phrasal monotony. Word-painting, though, even of this elementary type that intensifies the appeal "Was ever poor Damsel so sadly betray'd", was not general, for neither despair nor jollity were permitted too deep an expression in songs in which elegance and lightness of melody, above all, formed the primary consideration. In the same way, the accompaniment, laid out (as was common practice) in score, shows how an "orchestral" conception of a song effectively hindered the

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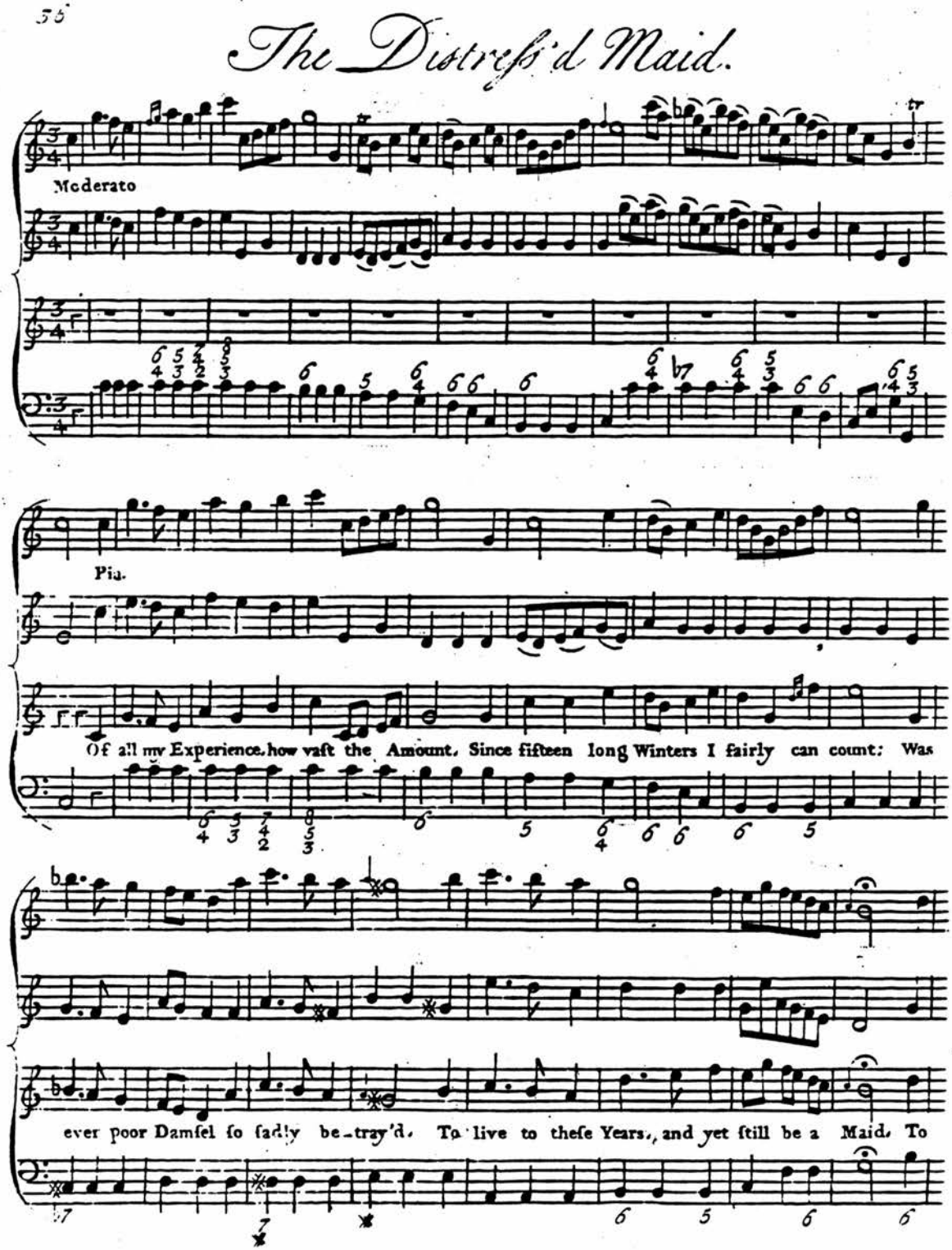
18 Vocal Melody. Book II, fols. 36-37. See Illus. II.



Illus. II. Arne, "The Distress'd Maid" [c.1747], Vocal Melody. Book II, pp.36-37 [reduced]. B.L. G.321(2).

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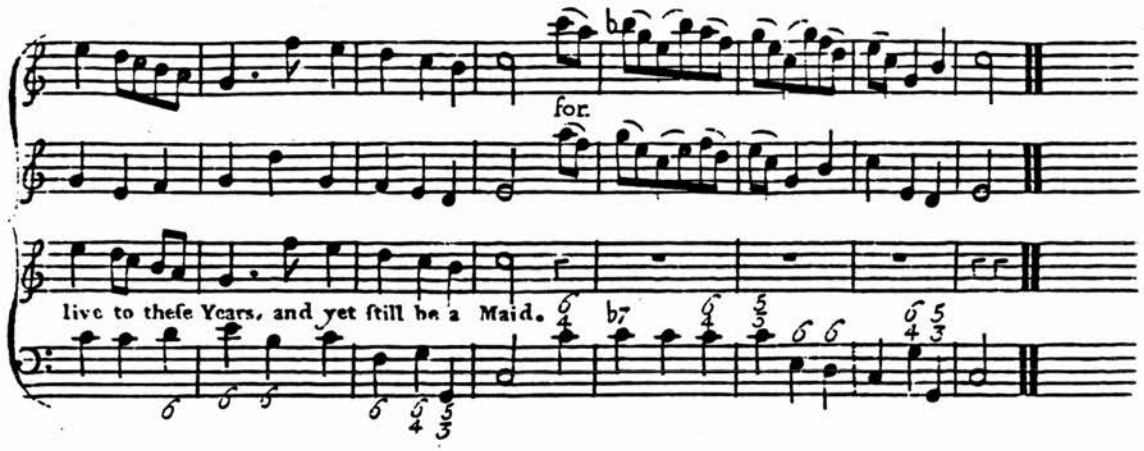
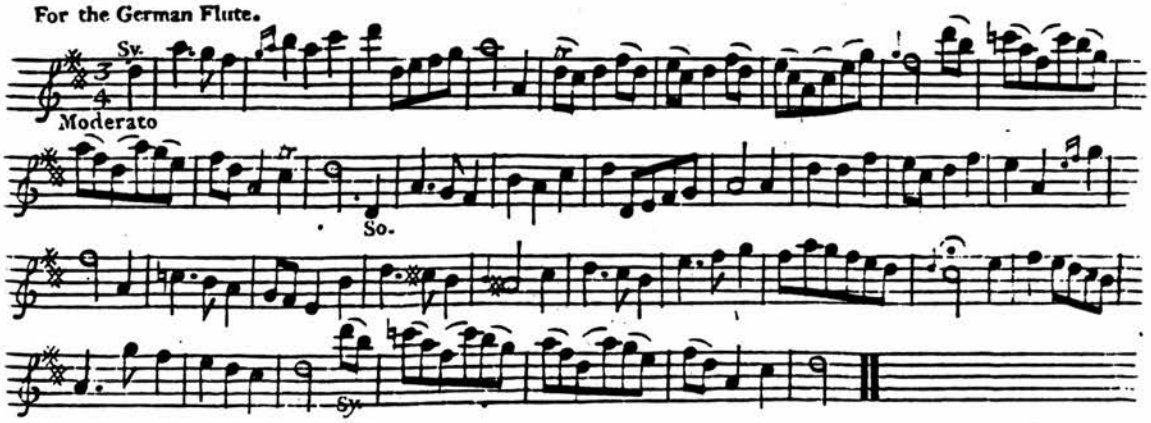


(2)
Ye Heroes triumphant, by Land and by Sea,
Sworn Vot'ries to Love, yet unmindfull of me,
Of Proweſs approv'd, of no Danger afraid,
Will ye ſtand by like Daſtards, and ſee me a Maid.

(3)
Ye Councellors ſage, who with Eloquent Tongue
Can do what you pleaſe, both with right and with wrong;
Can it be by Law or by Equity ſaid
That a comely young Girl ought to dye an old Maid?

(4)
Ye learned Phyſicians, whoſe excellent Skill
Can ſave, or demoliſh, can heal, or can kill,
To a poor forlorn Damſel contribute your Aid,
Who is ſick, very ſick of remaining a Maid.

(5)
Ye Fops I invoke not to liſt to my Song,
Who anſwer no End, and to no Sex belong,
Ye Echo's of Echo, and Shadows of Shade:
For if I had You — I might ſtill be a Maid.



Illus. II contd.

development of an independent keyboard accompaniment, such as was being wrought in the German lied from about 1750 onwards. Again, the interest lies predominantly in the easy melodic and narrative flow which made direct appeal to an audience who valued the occasional, the topical, and the witty, above the introspective, the theoretical, or the spiritual (this last finding an outlet in the hymn tradition that grew out of religious revivalist movements).

"The Distress'd Maid" is succeeded by a more elaborate cantata treatment of "Chaucer's Recantation" which is introduced by a short satirical prologue: "Chaucer, the celebrated old English Poet, being hard set upon by ye Ladies of his Time for writing a Song call'd (From sweet bewitching Tricks of Love) which was a great Satire on that Sex; In order to make them ample amends, wrote the following Recantation".[19] The text of the work was first printed anonymously in The Student of 30 June 1750 as "A PANEGYRICK on the LADIES", and heralded by the advertisement: "As it is sung at the SPRING GARDENS VAUX HALL, with great applause".[20] An opening accompanied recitative with varying directives to the instrumentalists proclaims, at the outset, a freer and more imaginative treatment of text. This change is apparent

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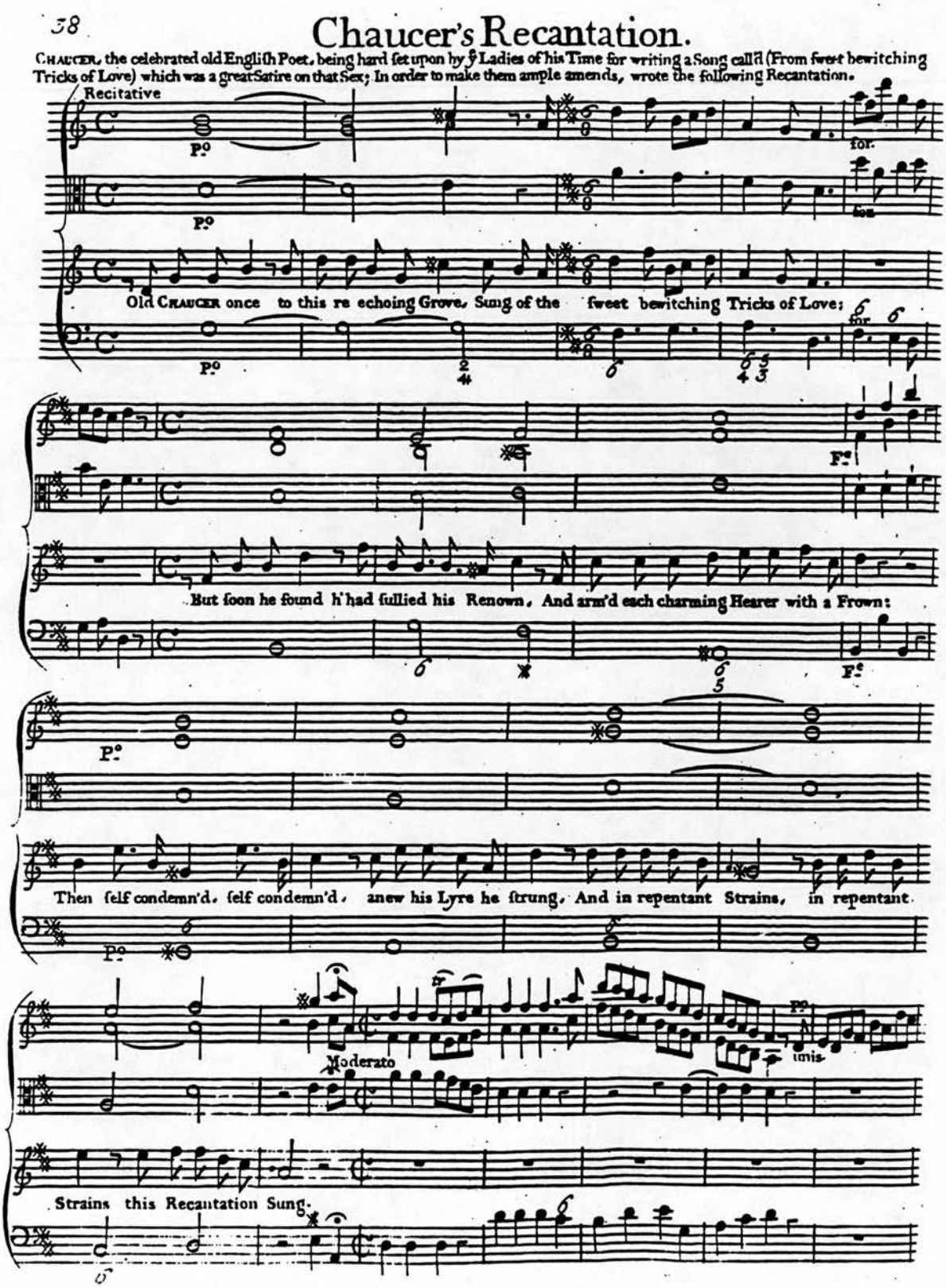
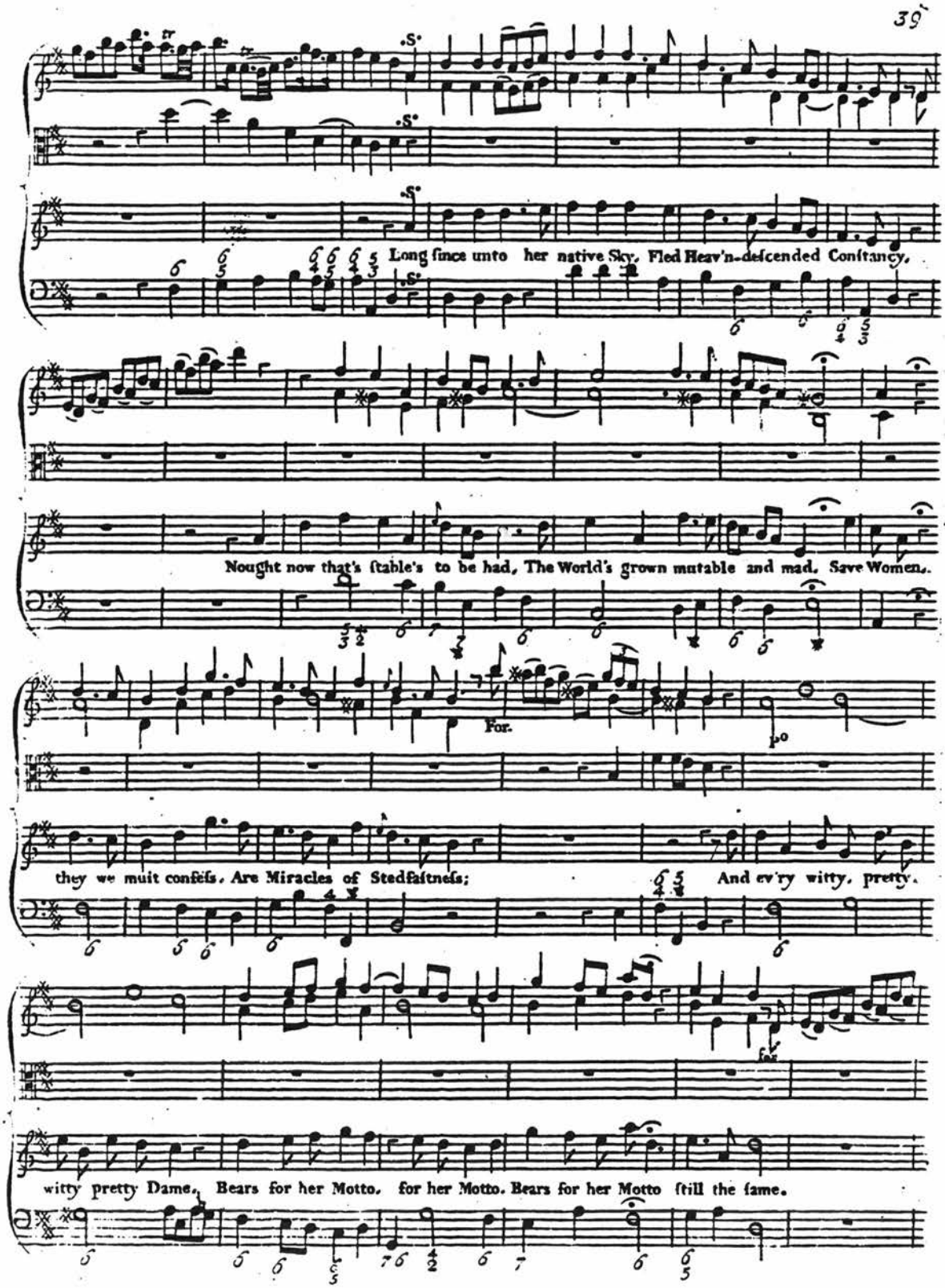
19 Ibid., fols. 38–42. See Illus. III.

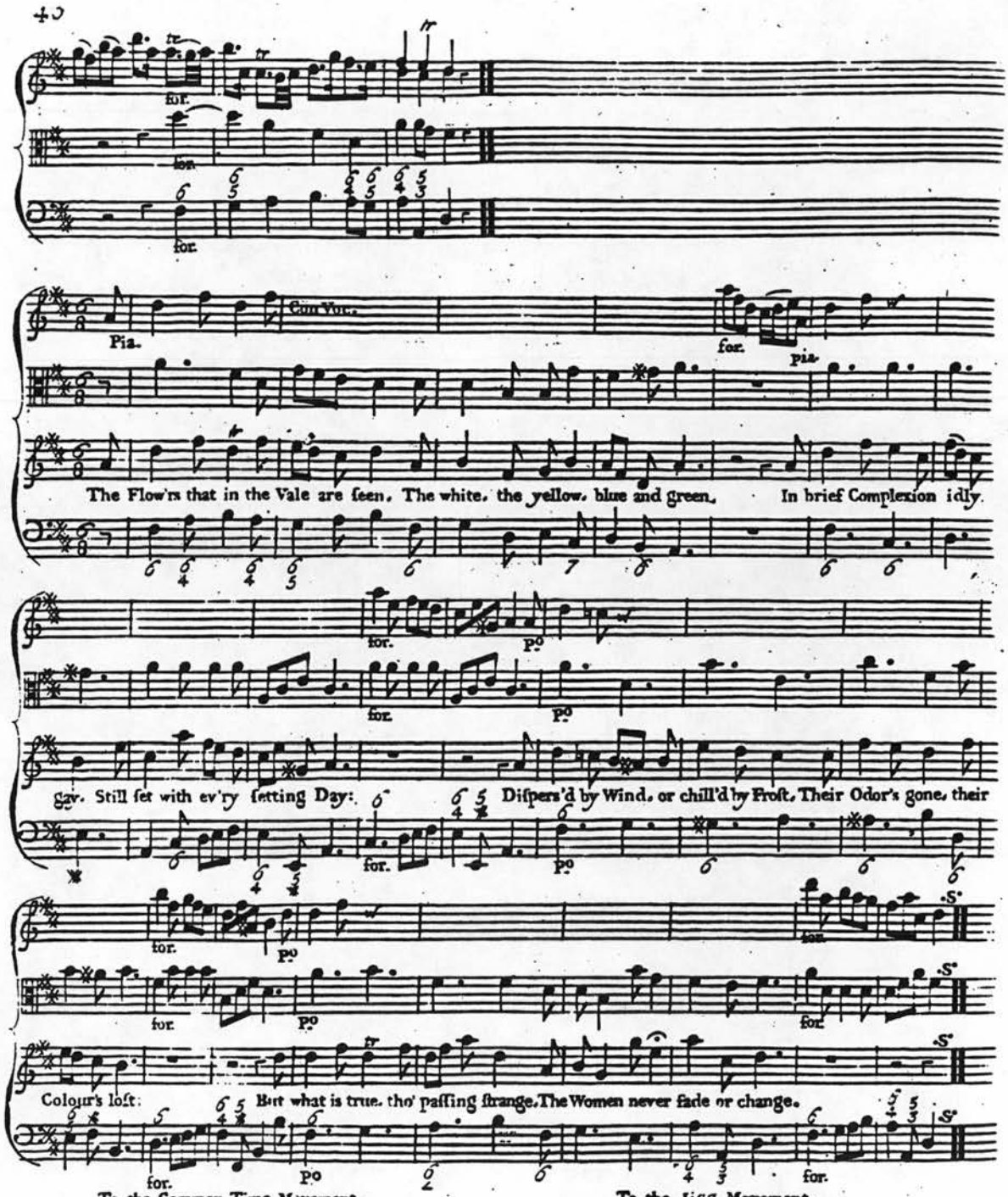
20 The Student, Or, The Oxford, and Cambridge Monthly Miscellany, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1750, 1751), I No. 6, 230–32. It may be assumed that the Recantation was sung during the preceding season, if not before.



Illus. III. Arne, "Chaucer's Recantation" [c.1747], Vocal Melody. Book II, pp.38-42 [reduced]. B.L. G.321(2)



Illus. III contd.



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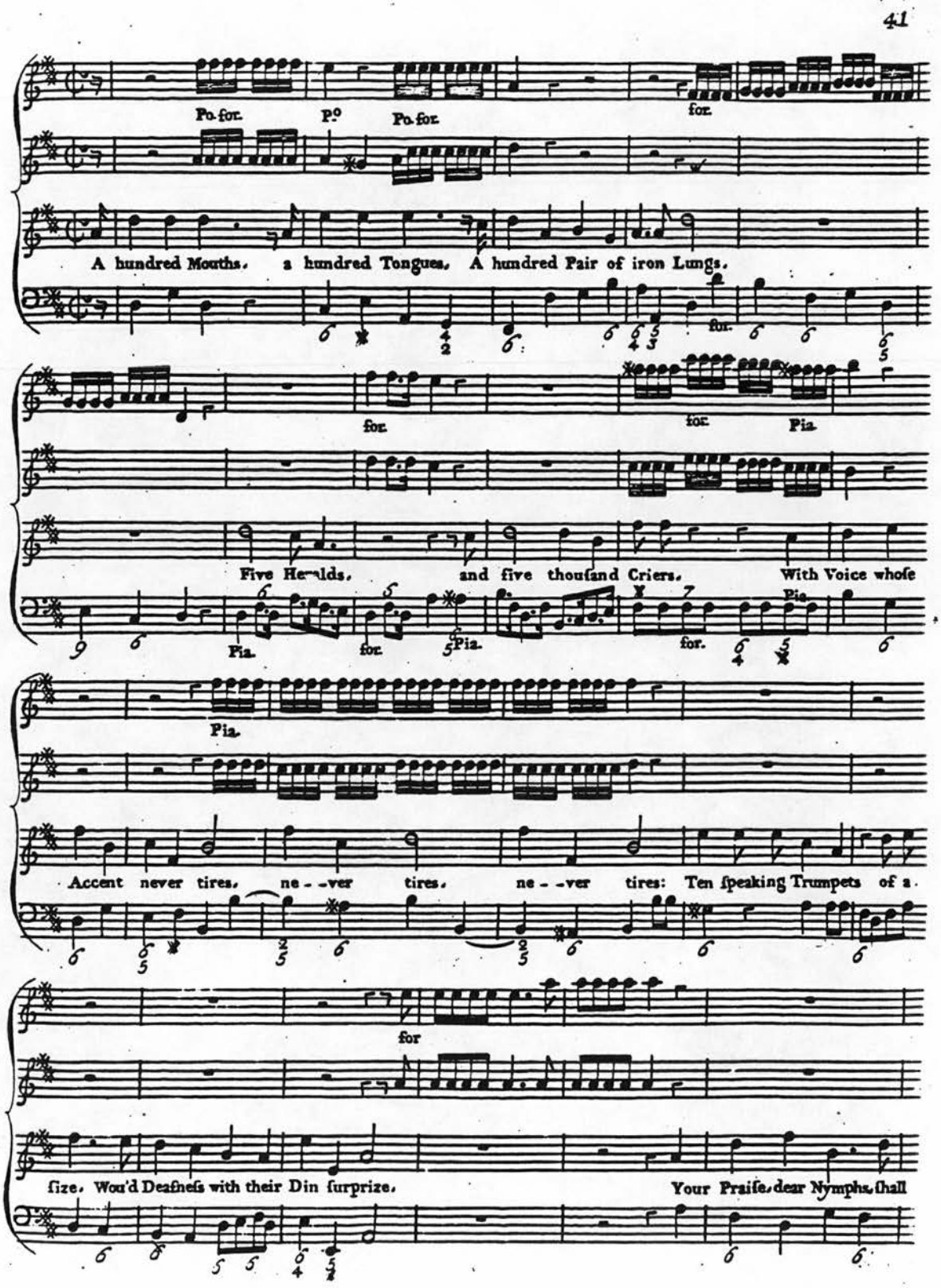

Illus. III contd.

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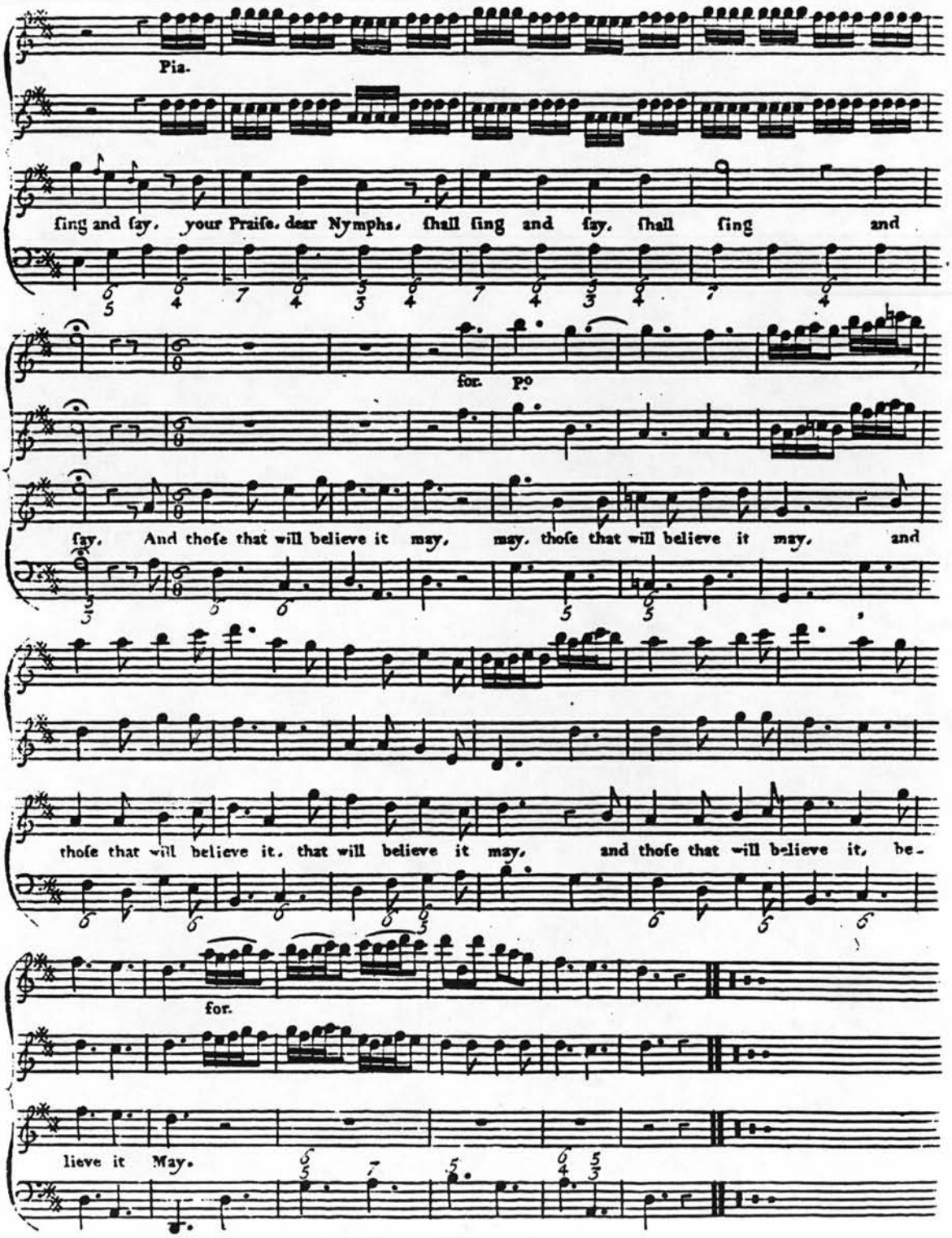

Illus. III contd.

in the sudden adoption of a $\frac{6}{8}$ dance rhythm for the words "sweet bewitching Tricks of Love", which are given appropriate echo in a rollicking two-bar "symphonie". Nevertheless, the key shift into the relative minor for the following phrase, and the three stark tonic chords on the word "Frown" also represent the somewhat sober bounds in which declamatory song was contained.

Arne's originality is further shown by the irregular phrase lengths he adopts for the aria "Long since unto her native Sky". If the allargando treatment of the rider "Save Women" complies with Smart's intent to "make them [the Ladies] ample amends", the transition into a minor mode for the confirmatory statement "Are Miracles of Stedfastness", compounded by the slippery semitone string figure that follows, underscores the satire implicit in his address. In passing we might note as obvious expressive touches, the rising melodic line culminating in the word "Sky", balanced by the downward-moving sequence describing Constancy's flight, and the unexpected choice of the tonic rather than the third of the E major chord for the qualifier "mad".

A move to a $\frac{6}{8}$ "Jigg Movement" for the second aria breaks up the four-square musical framework and provides a more lyrical rhythmic pulse for Smart's pastoral reflections. Again, the lines "Dispers'd by Wind . . . their Colour's lost" progress by way of a bass scale rising

in semitones, and sequential imitation in the melody, to a b minor close that mirrors the sentiments of the verse. The absence of interplay between the upper instrumental line and voice is indicated by the direction "Con Voc.", although three intermediate "symphonies" and a postlude give balance to the aria as a whole.

Repetition of the common time and $\frac{6}{8}$ stanzas leads directly into a tutti finale, "A hundred Mouths". Here Arne's use of reiterated semiquaver instrumental figures imparts weight and a fanfare-like noblesse that heighten the mock Euphuism of Smart's verse. Indeed, the accompaniment is sufficiently differentiated from the vocal line to assume its own rhythmic and melodic character. A series of unresolved $\frac{6}{4}\ \frac{5}{3}$ cadences in which the upper instrumental parts flesh out the full harmonies, leads to a bombastic half close on the dominant. An abrupt, anti-climactic return to $\frac{6}{8}$ time for the final equivocation "And those that will believe it may", rounds off Smart's narrative in the home key. Arne's setting serves his librettist well, and there is sufficient musical evidence here to justify Burney's estimation of the composer as having "surpassed . . . Purcell in [the] ease, grace, and variety" that he brought to his secular songs.[21]

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21 History of Music, IV, 675.

The third setting is found in Volume III of Arne's Vocal Melody, and may be dated according to the year in which Smart's affair with Harriote Pratt was terminated.[22] A notable textual variant is the omission here of what appears as verse three in subsequent printings of Smart's lyric (words only). Notwithstanding its bare two-stave presentation, "The Lass With the Golden Locks" is in many respects the most graceful and melodically attractive of the three songs. The dactylic measure, wide vocal leaps and rhythmic snap which Arne employs, recall the eighteenth-century Scottish vogue in music which had been cultivated since the publication of William Thomson's Orpheus Caledonius in 1725.[23] But the design is a simple, straightforward one, and the absence of instrumental and harmonic contrivances forms a musical counterpart to the personalized and unaffected character of the poetry. The transition from tonic to dominant by way of an ambiguous sharpened 4th (in C major), and the darkening of the word "neglect" by use of a flattened 7th, give melodic shape to a song which otherwise remains firmly in the tonic key. If, as seems likely, "The Lass With the Golden Locks" was sung at Vauxhall by Thomas Lowe,

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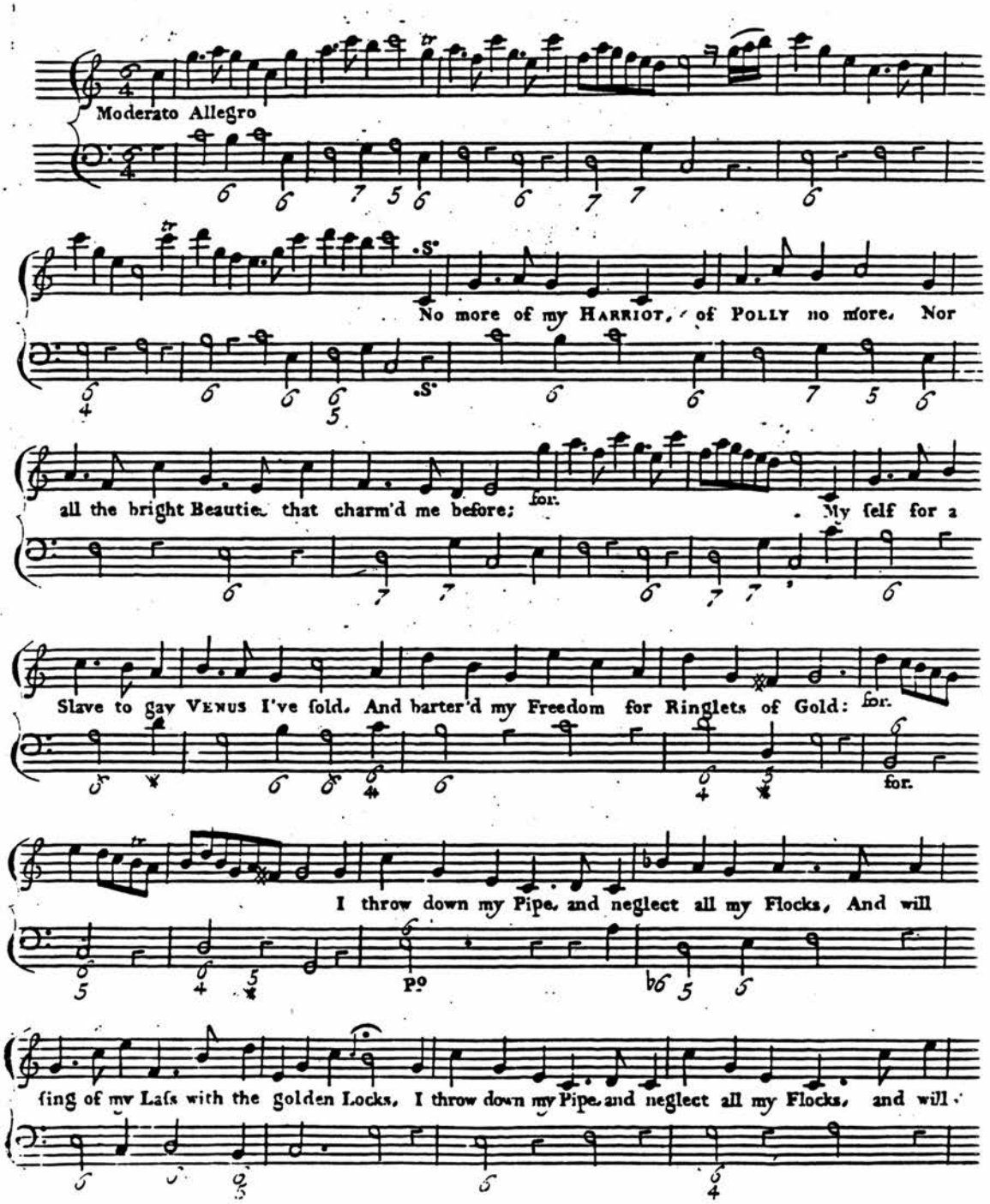
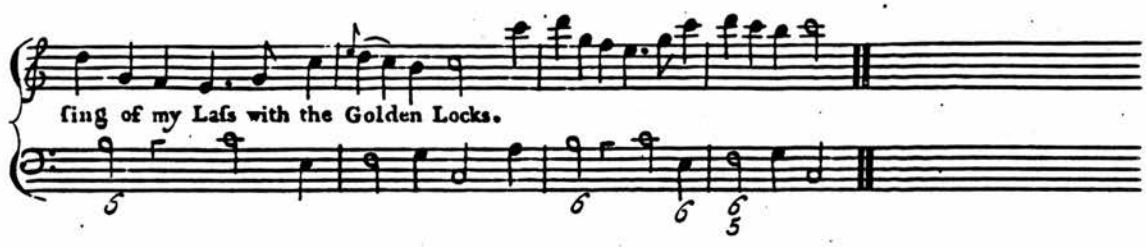
22 Vocal Melody. Book III. A Favourite Collection of Songs and Dialogues Sung at Marybon-Gardens by Master Arne and Miss Falkner, and at Vaux-Hall-Gardens by Miss Stevenson and Mr. Lowe. Compos'd by Mr. Arne (London, [c. 1750]), fols. 12-13. See Illus. IV.

23 Orpheus Caledonius: or a Collection of the best Scotch Songs (London, [1725]). The Collection comprises 58 folio leaves including 8 of melodies set for the German flute.

12 *The Lass with the Golden Locks.*



Illus. IV. Arne, "The Lass with the Golden Locks" [c.1750], Vocal Melody. Book III, pp.12-13 [reduced]. B.L. G.321(2).



(2)

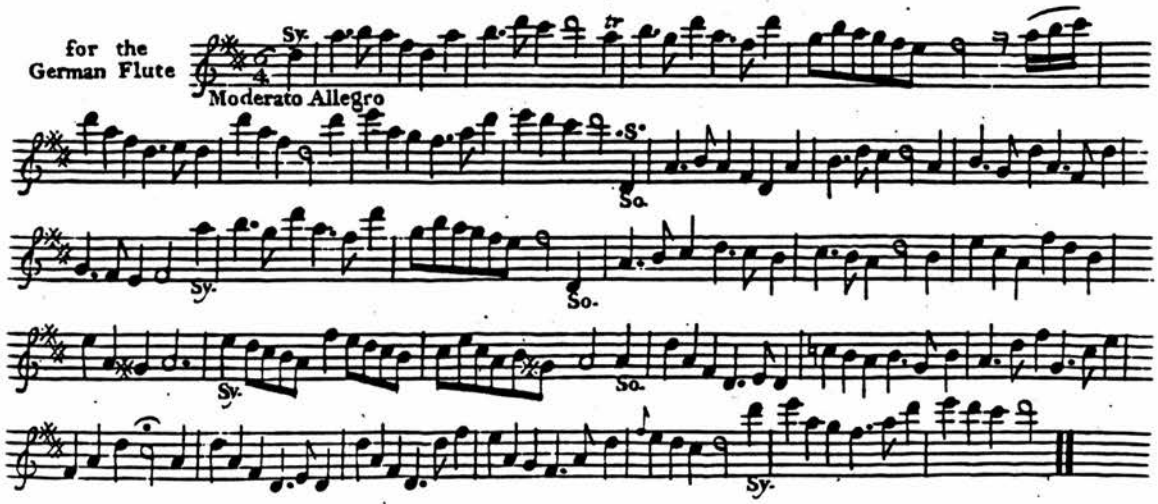
Tho' o'er her white Forehead the gilt Treſſes flow,
Like the Rays of the Sun on a Hillock of Snow;
Such, Painters of old, drew the Queen of the Fair,
'Tis the Taſte of the Ancients, 'tis Claſſical Hair:
And tho' Witlings may ſcoff, and tho' Raillery mocks;
Yet I'll ſing of my Laſs with the golden Locks.

(3)

Than the Swan in the Brook, ſhe's more dear to my Sight,
Her Mien is more ſtately, her Breaſt is more white,
Her Lips are like Rubies, all Rubies above,
Which are fit for the Labour, or Language of Love;
At the Park in the Mall, at the Play in the Box,
My Laſs bears the Bell with her golden Locks.

(4)

Her beautifull Eyes as they roll or they flow,
Shall be glad for my Joy, or ſhall weep for my Woe,
She ſhall eaſe my fond Heart, and ſhall ſooth my ſoft Pain,
While thouſands of Rivals are ſighing in vain:
Let them rail at the Fruit they can't reach, like the Fox,
While I have the Laſs with the golden Locks.



Illus. IV contd.

the association is a happy one, for both Arne and Lowe subscribed to Smart's Poems on Several Occasions (1752).

By way of conclusion, it is appropriate that Arne's craftmanship should be acknowledged some thirty years later, for two of his settings are included in a collection of celebrated English airs.[24] In both cases the text of the poem is printed in the first volume, and the corresponding music given on a single stave (melody only) in the third book. "Chaucer's Recantation" appears under the subtitle "A Panegyric on the Ladies", with a footnote that indicates the place of performance: "Spring-gardens, Vauxhall, where the foregoing ballad was sung".[25] An accompanying copperplate engraving forms a decorative adjunct to Smart's words. Similarly, "The Lass With the Golden Locks" is found in the first volume, and Arne's setting, under the title "No more of my Harriot, of Polly no more", in the third.[26] Accidental variants of text and music apart, the transcription from the full score of Vocal Melody is exact. The instrumental "symphonies", however, are omitted in the later versions, although Smart's name is now appended to each song.

If we can conjecture 1746 or 1747 as the year in which Smart and Arne were first introduced, in the case of the poet's

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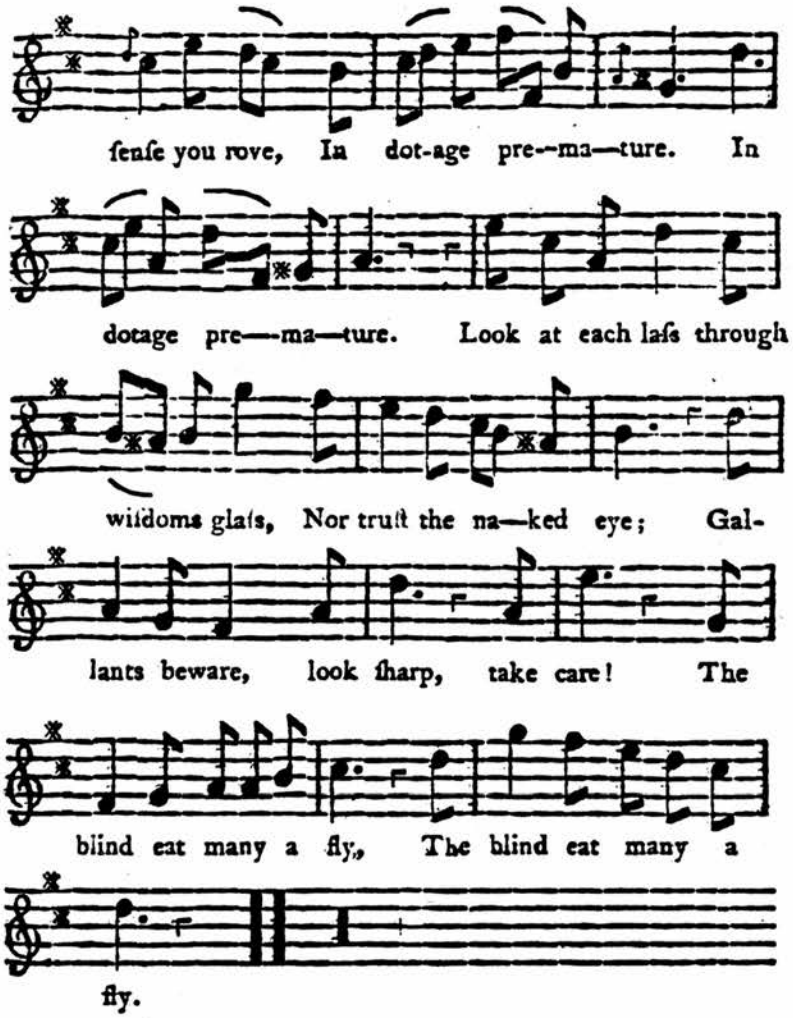
24 [Joseph Ritson], A Select Collection of English Songs, 3 vols. (London, 1783).

25 Ibid., I, 105-7. The music may be found in III [n.p.], sigs. D^{r} - $D3^{r}$; see Illus. V.

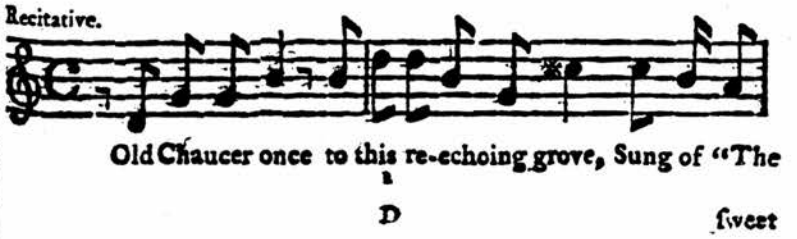
26 Ibid., I, 210-11; III, sig. $G5^{r}$; see Illus. VI.



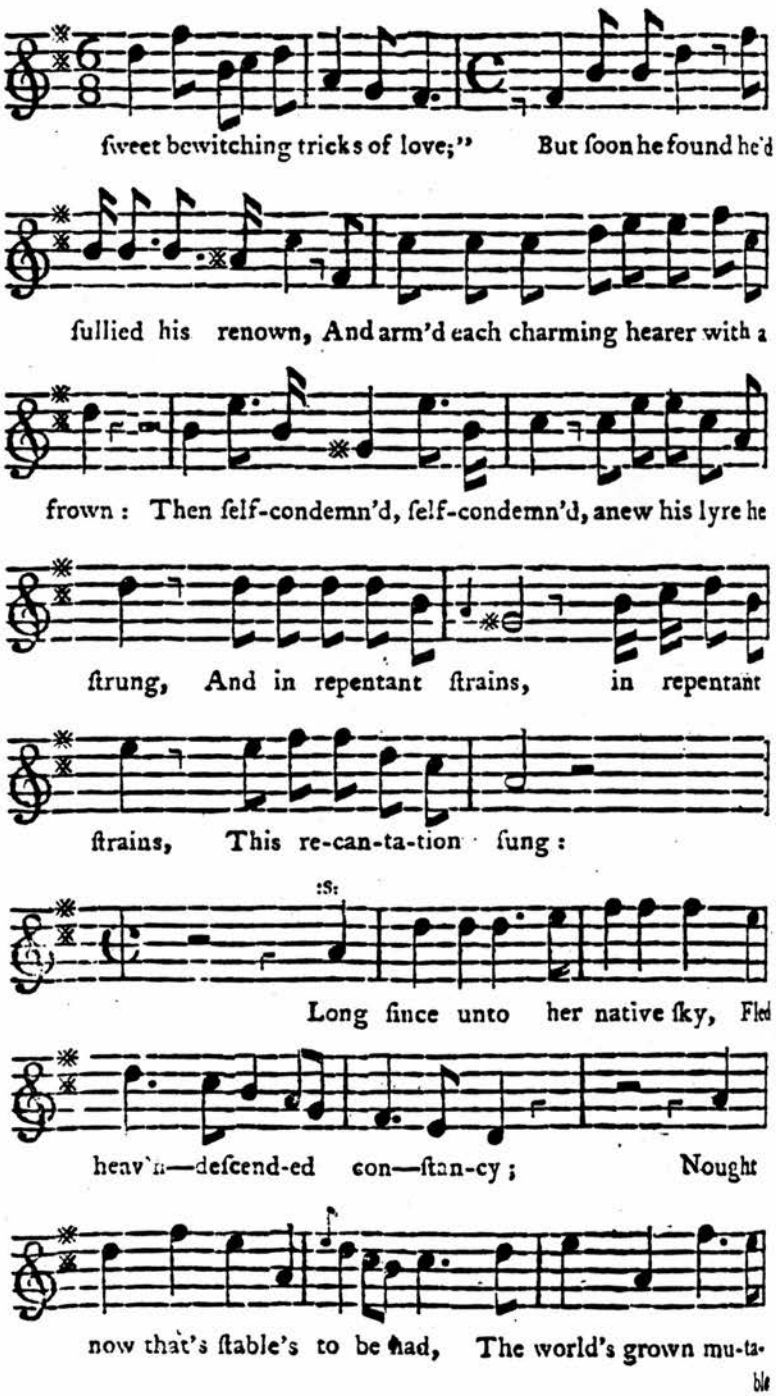
SONG XIX. Old Chaucer once to this re-echoing grove.
[Smart.

Set by dr. Arne.

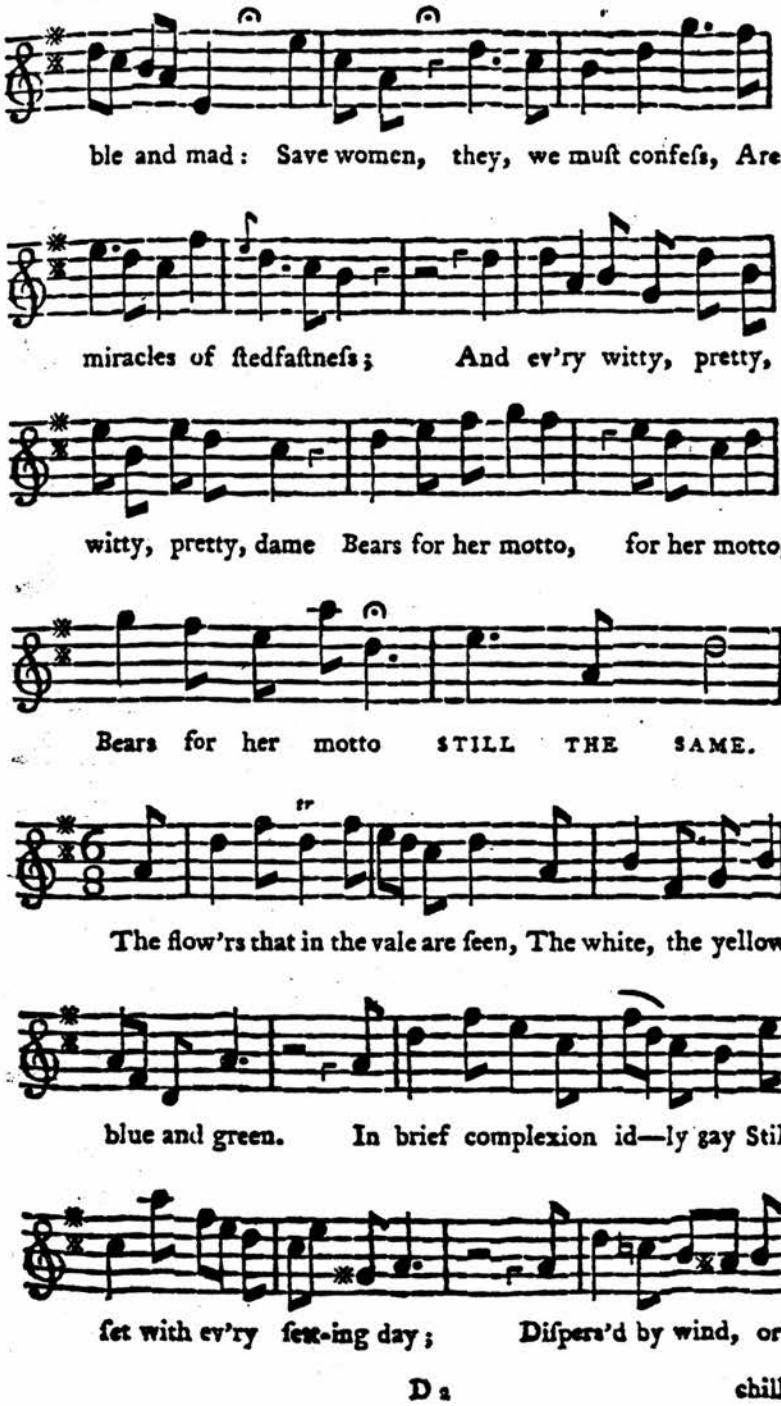
Recitative.



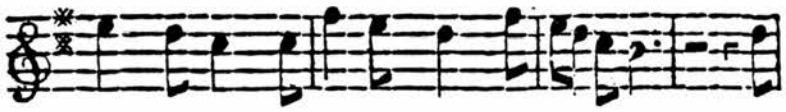
Illus. V. Arne, "Chaucer's Recantation", in [Ritson], A Select Collection (1783), III, sigs. D^{r} - $D3^{r}$.



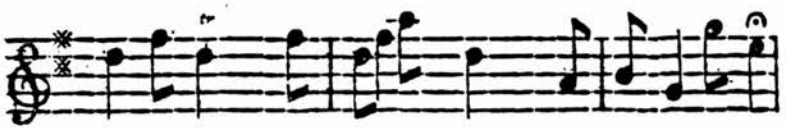
Illus. V contd.



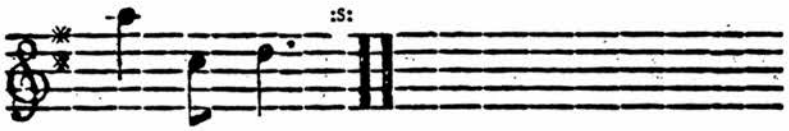
Illus. V contd.



chill'd by froſt, Their odour's gone, their colour loſt: But



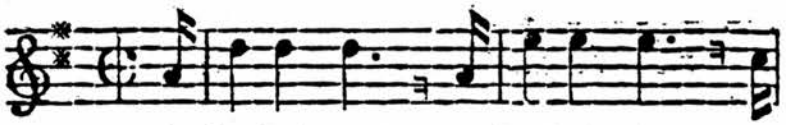
what is true, though paſſing ſtrange, The women never



fade or change.

V. 3. To the common time movement.

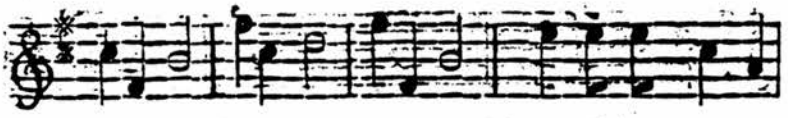
V. 4. To the jig movement.



An hundred mouths, an hundred tongues, An

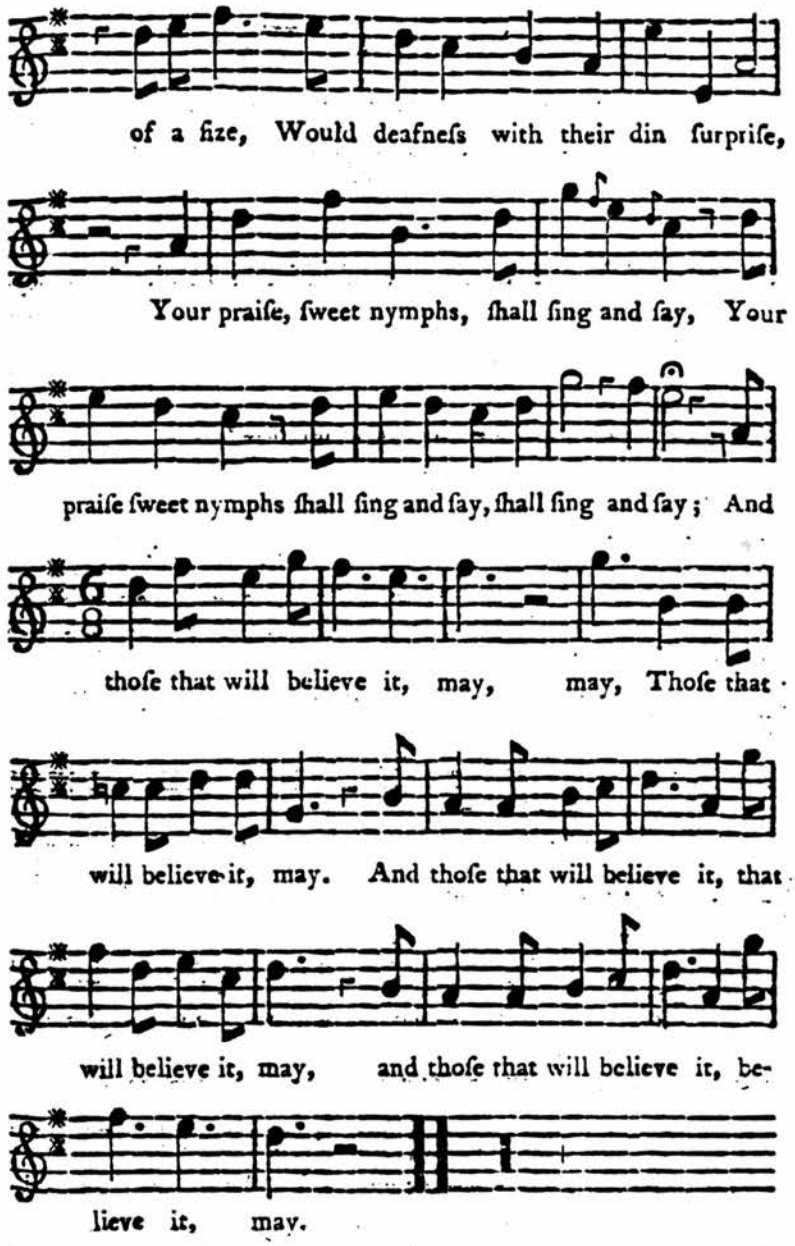
hundred pair of i-ron longs; Five heralds, and

five thouſand cryers, With throats whoſe ac-cent



never tires, never tires, never tires; Ten ſpeaking-trumpets,

of

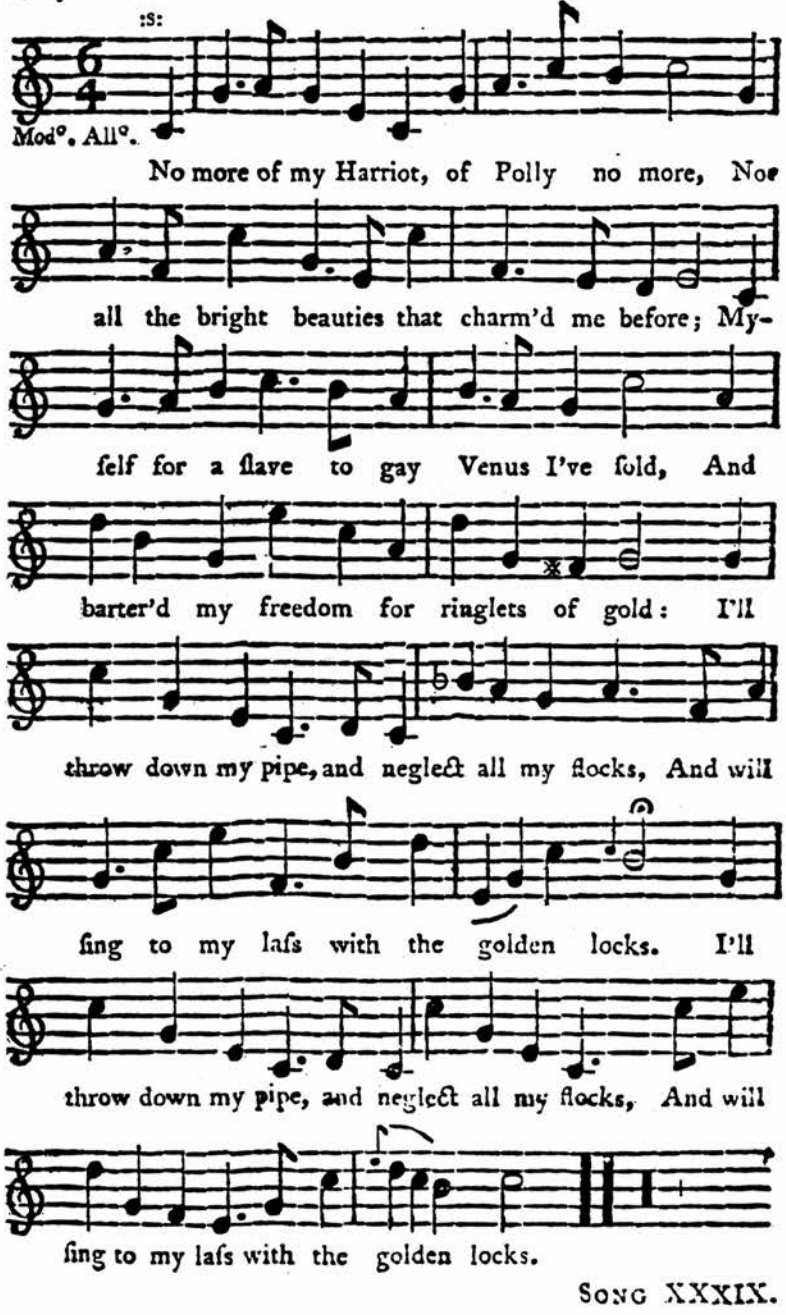


Illus. V contd.

Song XXXVIII. No more of my Harriot, of Polly no more.

[Smart.

Set by dr. Arne.



Song XXXIX.

Illus. VI. Arne, "The Lass with the Golden Locks", in [Ritson], A Select Collection (1783), III, sig. G5[r].

relationship with Boyce, the matter can be stated more exactly. Smart's poetry had been appearing regularly in the major London periodicals since 1745, and his lyric "Idleness" was first printed in The Gentleman's Magazine of that year, to a simple aria setting by "Mr BOYCE".[27]

William Boyce (1710–1779), who may be counted among the greatest English composers of the eighteenth century, was also esteemed as an organist, teacher and conductor. His rise in London musical circles was rapid, and the diversity of posts he occupied testifies to the breadth and liberality of his talents. Appointed Composer to the Chapel Royal in 1736, Boyce assumed the conductorship of the Three Choirs Festival from 1737, and in 1739 was a signatory to the Charter of the Royal Society of Musicians. He was sworn in as Master of the King's Music in 1757, and the following year, engaged as principal organist of the Chapel Royal. His most valuable service to choral music lay in amassing and editing a selection of the finest English anthems, motets and services from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, which were published as the three-volume Cathedral Music between 1760 and 1773.[28]

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27 Vol. XV (May 1745), 268–69.

28 Cathedral Music: Being a Collection in Score of the Most Valuable and Useful Compositions for that Service, by the Several English Masters of the last Two Hundred Years, 3 vols. (London, 1760, 1768, 1773). A second edition was published in 1788, with Memoirs of Boyce "Now first published" by J[ohn] H[awkins], in I, i–xi.

Notwithstanding this legacy of sacred music, which also included separate works on a religious theme,[29] the early part of Boyce's composing career was rich in theatrical and popular ventures. The success of these undertakings brought him financial security, and "disseminated . . . [his] fame . . . throughout the kingdom, as a dramatic and miscellaneous composer".[30] As well as contributing incidental music to masques, plays and pastiches,[31] he had been writing songs for Vauxhall since about 1734, and was also to pen many settings for performance at Ranelagh and Marylebone.[32] His theatre music is particularly associated with Drury Lane, for together with Arne and Burney, he was enlisted to write pantomimes for performance there in the 1750s during Garrick's early years as joint patentee. Nor were Boyce's abilities directed solely towards choral

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29 For example, Solomon. A Serenata, in Score, Taken from the Canticles (London, 1743). The list of subscribers includes many of Smart's associates, who also contributed to his Poems on Several Occasions (1752).

30 Burney, History of Music, III (1789), 620.

31 As, for instance, The Chaplet. A Musical Entertainment, As it is Perform'd at the Theatre-Royal in Drury-Lane (London, [1750]; or Love in a Village. A Comic Opera. As it is Perform'd at the THEATRE ROYAL in COVENT-GARDEN (London, [1763]), to which Boyce is one of 12 contributors. The Chaplet, first staged on 2 December 1749, proved phenomenally popular, and received over 100 performances during its first season.

32 For example, "The Constant Lover", The London Magazine, XV (August 1746), 417. Some songs from musical miscellanies achieved popular status, as ["Come cheer up my Lads"] "Sung by Mr. Champnes in Harlequin's Invasion" ([London, c. 1759]).

music and song. In 1760 he published a set of eight symphonies,[33] some based on earlier dramatic overtures,[34] which although adhering to Baroque stylistic practices, displayed a melodic inventiveness that anticipated the thematic innovations of J.C. Bach. His organ voluntaries (published posthumously) are highly regarded,[35] and his trio sonatas,[36] although invariably cast in the traditional tempo sequence of slow-fast-slow-fast, were "longer and more generally purchased, performed, and admired, than any productions of the kind in this kingdom".[37]

Although it cannot be stated with certainty that Boyce and Smart were personally acquainted, there is a good deal of circumstantial evidence to suggest that this was the case. When Smart was still technically resident at Cambridge, Boyce was elected to supply music for the Installation of the Duke of Newcastle as Chancellor on 1 July 1749. His task was twofold: to provide a setting of William Mason's Ode for the actual ceremony, and to compose an anthem for

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33 Eight Symphonys in Eight Parts. Six for Violins, Hoboys, or German Flutes, and Two for Violins, French Horns and Trumpets . . . Opera Seconda (London, [1760]).

34 Although of varying dates, the overtures were published in a set as: Twelve Overtures in Seven, Nine, Ten, and Twelve Parts (London, 1770).

35 Ten Voluntaries for the Organ or Harpsichord (London, [1785]).

36 Twelve Sonatas for Two Violins; With a Bass for the Violoncello or Harpsicord [separate parts] (London, 1747).

37 Burney, History of Music, III, 620.

performance on the following day, Commencement Sunday.[38] These commissions were apparently despatched in a satisfactory manner, and Gray described the proceedings with his customary acerbity: "Mason's Ode was the only Entertainment, that had any tolerable Elegance; & for my own Part I think it (with some little abatements) uncommonly well on such an Occasion".[39] The Gentleman's Magazine merely noted that "The words and musick were extremely elegant, and well suited to the occasion",[40] and Mason's Ode itself was afforded scant praise in the List of Books published in The Monthly Review: "Our panegyrick odes have so near Sameness in them all, that we imagine our readers will excuse our quoting no passages from this; which is, however, looked upon as a very ingenious performance by the admirers of that species of poetry".[41] Although Smart was not present on the day of investiture, his friendship with Mason is of sufficient import to suggest

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38 An Ode Perform'd in the Senate House at Cambridge . . . At the Installation of his Grace The Duke of Newcastle, Chancellor of the University . . . To which is added an Anthem ([London, 1749]). In this full score the Ode comprises 67 pages of music, and the Anthem, 70. Mason's Ode was also printed separately at Cambridge in 1749. Part One comprises 4 recits. alternating with 3 airs and a chorus; Part Two is divided into 3 successive recits. and airs, with a concluding Grand Chorus.

39 Correspondence of Thomas Gray, ed. Paget Toynbee and Leonard Whibley, 3 vols. (Oxford, 1935), I, 323. There is a further account in Charles Henry Cooper, Annals of Cambridge, 5 vols. (Cambridge, 1842-1908), IV (1852), 268-72.

40 Vol. XIX (July 1749), 328.

41 Vol. I (July 1749), 238. See also The London Magazine, XVIII (July 1749), 334-35; the text of Mason's Ode was printed in this same issue, pp. 329-30.

the possibility of a meeting with Boyce, had a liaison not already been formed during the past five years. Both Boyce and Mason, moreover, subscribed to Smart's Poems on Several Occasions (1752), with Boyce specifying two copies of the handsome volume.

Smart and Boyce could also have met at Drury Lane, and there are further connections with Boyce's teacher Pepusch who also subscribed to Smart's Poems. By all accounts blessed with a mild and benevolent disposition, Boyce, more than any other composer associated with Smart, provided practical musical assistance over a long period of time. He set at least five of the poet's lyrics, and twenty years after "Idleness" first appeared, he contributed six tunes to the Collection of Melodies which accompanied his Psalms of 1765. Boyce was also well disposed towards his fellow-musicians, and near the end of his life subscribed to Burney's History of Music (1776). As with Arne, so too Boyce composed dozens of miscellaneous songs, serenatas, odes and cantatas for public performance, which he eventually formed into a six-volume work and published under the title of Lyra Britannica.[42] (Two of Smart's poems are included in this series.) He also contributed many songs to the London, Monthly and Gentleman's magazines, and Smart was later to repay his interest by printing several of his lyrics in the ill-fated Universal Visiter [sic] of 1756.

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42 Each volume bore a separate (and different) title page. The set was published between [1747] and [1759], and printed for, and sold by, John Walsh in Catharine Street.

As stated, "Idleness" was the first of Smart's songs to appear in print. Following the Gentleman's Magazine edition (or anticipating it, if first performed at Vauxhall), the aria was quickly published as a single sheet folio, probably in the same year, and was taken up again in 1748 by The London Magazine.[43] Both words and music are identical in all three copies, except for a few accidentals of punctuation and typography. The bass "d" on the first syllable of "Sister" in the London version is an obvious misprint. But other variations in scoring, such as the appoggiatura in the "symphonie" of the folio transcript, the accented passing note on "slow" in the folio and London printings, or the added trills in the Gentleman's and folio copies, are stylistic embellishments which were resigned, in any case, to the whim of the performer(s).

Boyce's strophic setting is tonally unremarkable, and follows a conventional movement from tonic major to a dominant major close at bar eight, that corresponds to the midpoint of Smart's verse. By way of implied harmonic shifts to a minor at "Sister of Peace", and an imperfect cadence in the relative minor on the phrase "soft and slow", the song returns to G major and concludes with a two-bar "symphonie" that merely iterates the preceding vocal phrase. Melodically, "Idleness" is operatic in conception and lacks the naturalness of line that distinguishes the finest of Arne's songs. Boyce's

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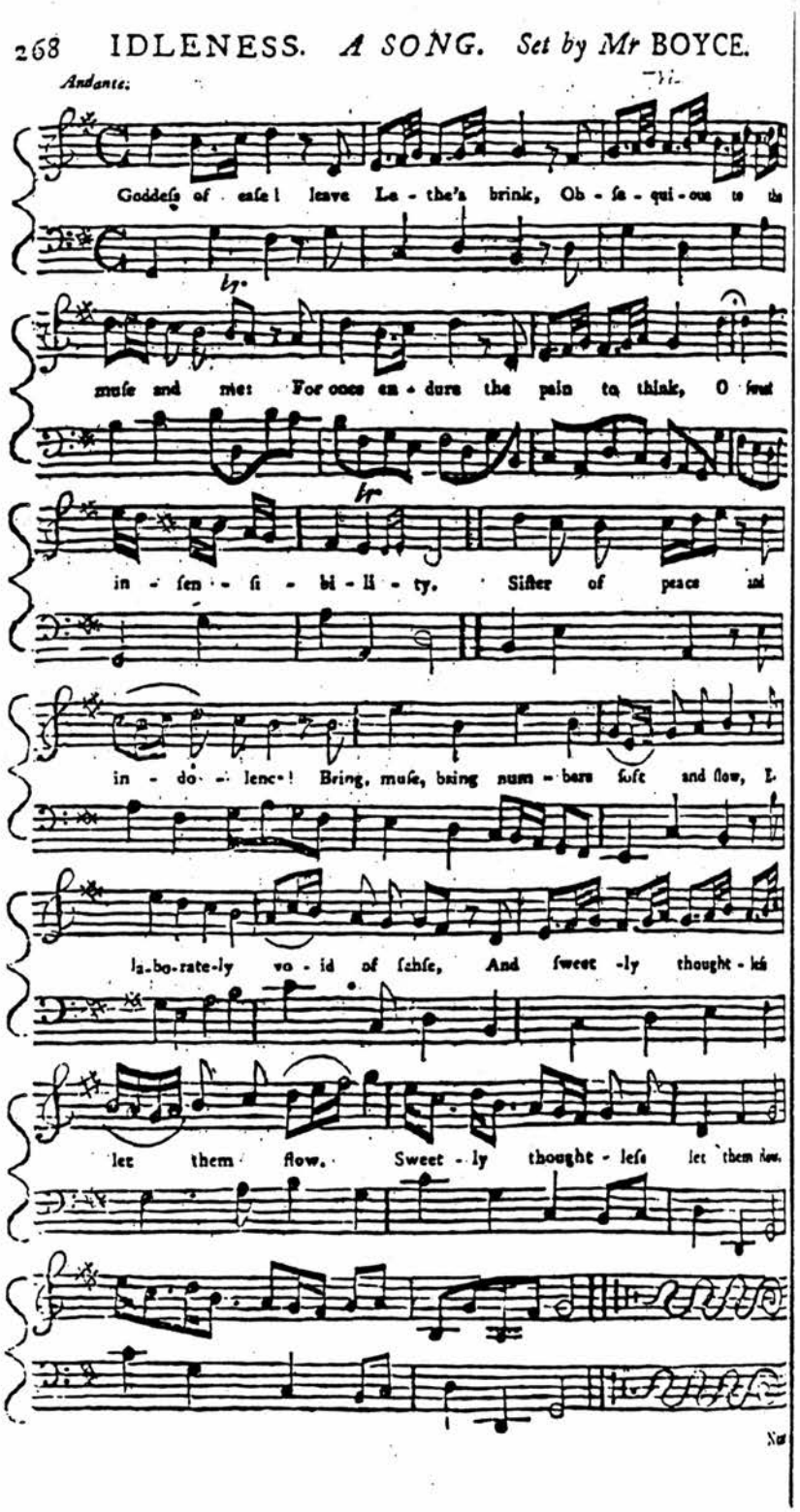
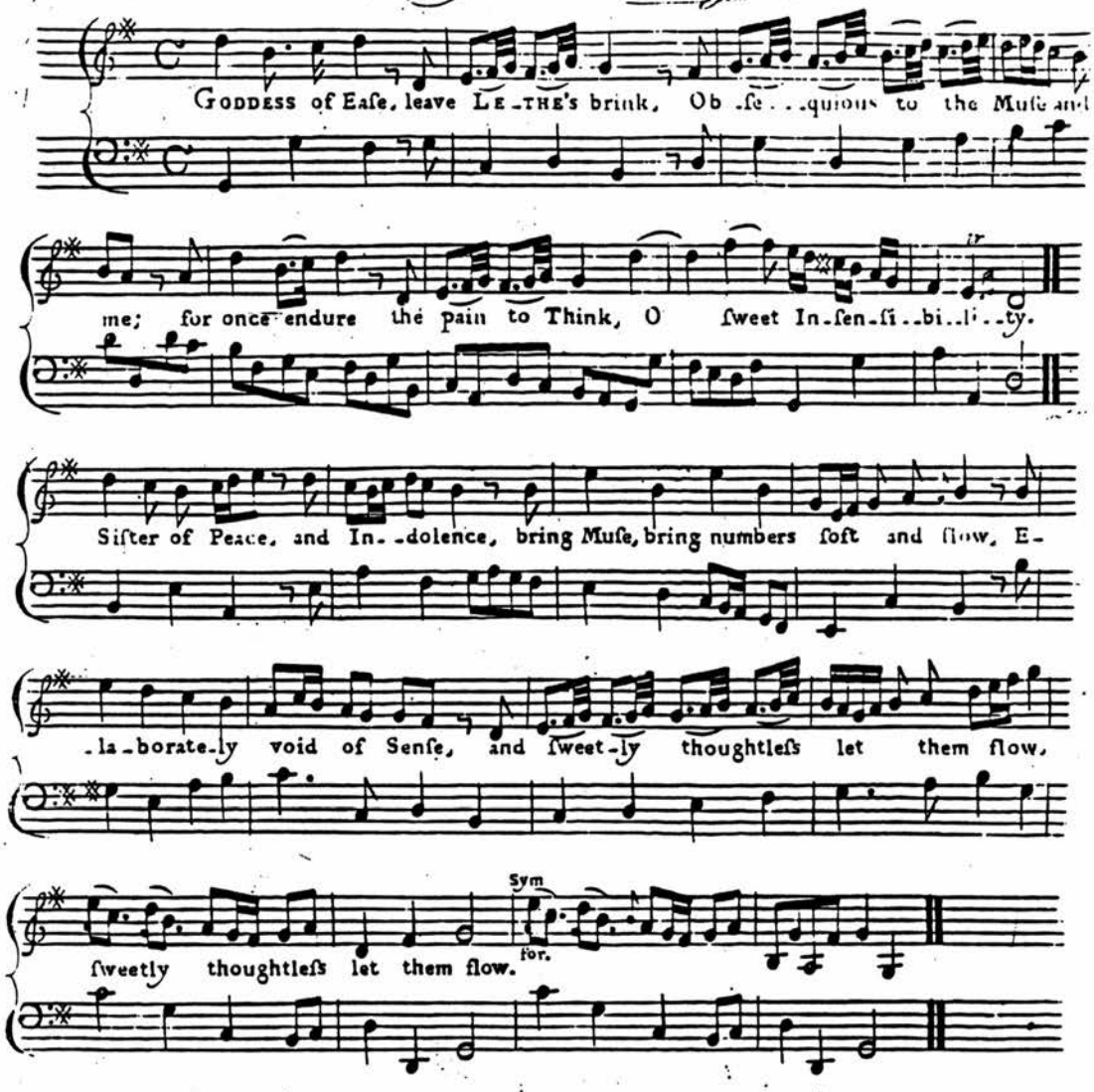
43 The Gentleman's Magazine, loc. cit. ["Idleness. A Song"] "Set by Mr. Boyce" ([London, 1745?]), s.sh.fol.; The London Magazine, XVII (January 1748), 34-35. See Illus. VII, a, b, c.



Illus. VIIa. Boyce, "Idleness. A Song", The Gentleman's Magazine, XV (May 1745), 268.

Set by Mr. Boyce.

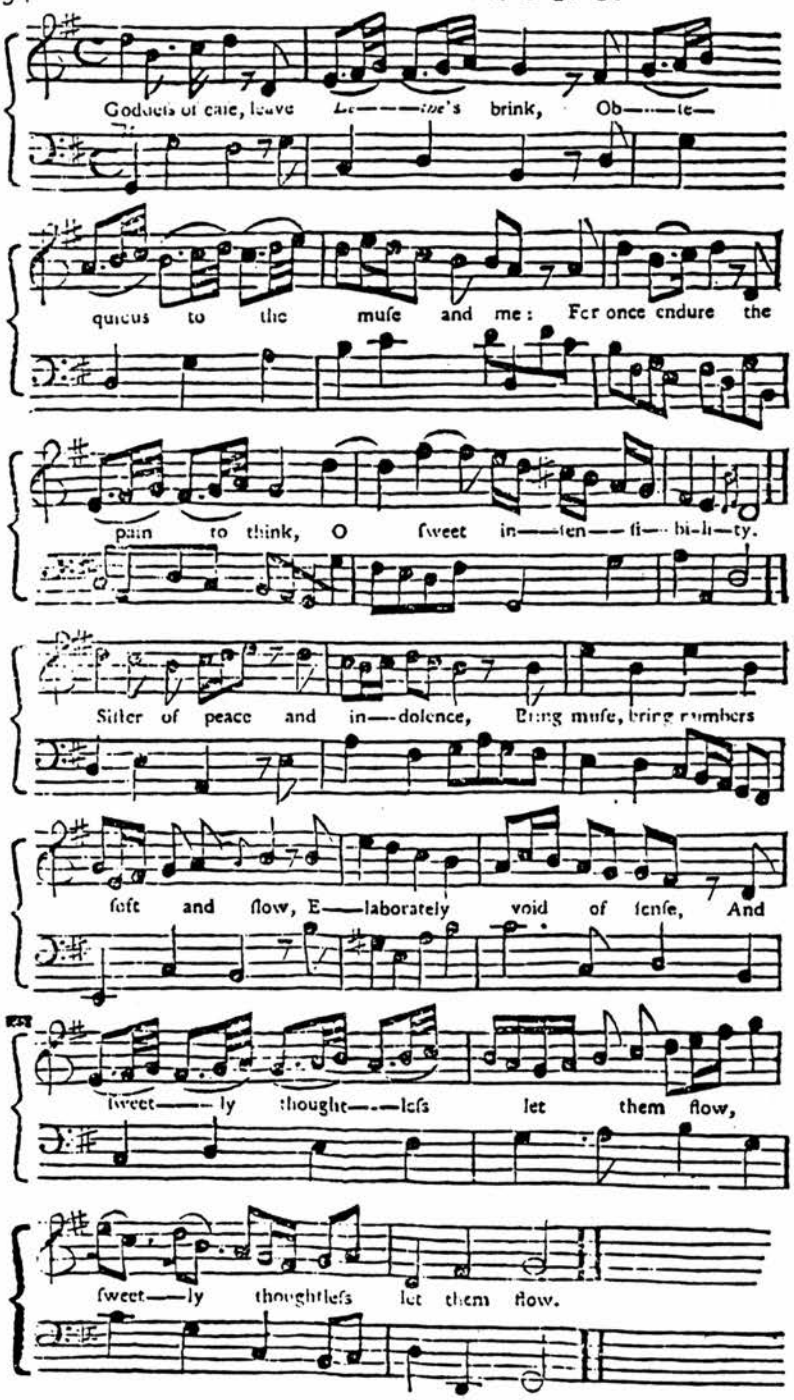


Near to ſome Cowslips painted Mead,
There let me Doze away dull hours,
And under me let Flora ſpread
A Sopha of her ſofteſt flowers.
Where Philomel, your notes you breathe,
Forth from behind the neighbouring Pine;
Whilſt murmurs of the Stream beneath,
Still flow in uniſon with thine.
flow &c.

For Thee, O Idleness! the woes
Of Life we patiently endure,
Thou art the Source, whence Labour flows,
We ſhun Thee, but to make Thee ſure.
For who'd endure Wars toil and waſte,
Or who th' hoarſe thundering of the Sea,
But to be Idle at the laſt,
And find a pleaſing End in Thee.
find &c.

Illus. VIIb. Boyce, ["Idleness"], [1745?], s.sh.fol. [reduced]. B.L. G.308(5).

34 IDLENESS. *A SONG.*



Illus. VIIc. Boyce, "Idleness. A Song", The London Magazine, XVII (January 1748), 34.

treatment of "Obsequious to the Muse and me" seems unnecessarily fussy, and the active continuo part in the next three bars all but obscures the vocal thread. But the attractive syncopation on the exclamation "O sweet Insensibility" would make its point in performance, as would the ascending sequence climaxing on the word "flow", balanced by downward movement for its repetition and resolution. The circumstance of three separate printings, alone indicates a measure of popularity; and this is confirmed by the song's inclusion in Ritson's selection, where it is printed under Smart's name.[44]

The first book of Boyce's Lyra Britannica was published in 1747. Among the items it contains is an extended through-composed setting of Smart's "To Miss A——n",[45] which almost certainly received its inaugural performance at Vauxhall. Working from a closely defined verse form, Boyce has devised a concert-piece that displays considerable ingenuity of figuration, harmony and rhythm. The pattern is set in the opening recitative. Following a strongly punctuated cadence in the relative minor at bar six, the tonality abruptly shifts to the dominant major in response to the "entrance" of the beloved. The remaining bars oscillate between tonic and dominant, and reach a poetic and musical climax on the words

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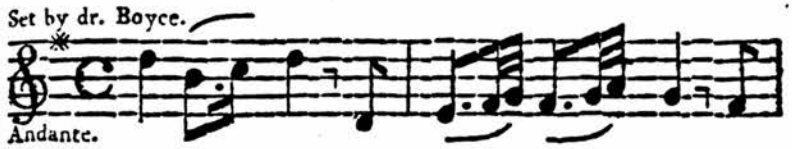
44 English Songs, III, sigs. [2] E7[r-v]. See Illus. VIII. The text is printed in II, 99-100.

45 Cantata ["Long with undistinguish'd flame"], in Lyra Britannica: Book I. Being A Collection of Songs, Duets, and Cantatas, on Various Subjects. Compos'd by Mr. Boyce (London, [1747]), pp. 18-21. See Illus. IX.

Song XVII. Goddeſs of eaſe leave Lethes brink. Smart.

Set by dr. Boyce.

Andante.



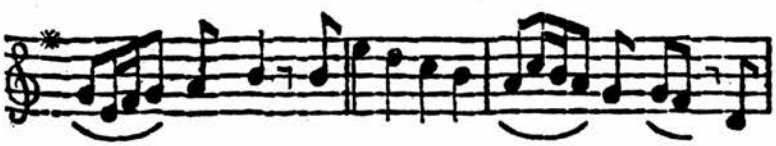
God--eſs of eaſe, leave Le——thes brink Ob-

ſe——quious to the muſe and me; For

once en—dure the pain to think, O—

— ſweet In— —ſen— —ſi— —bi——li— —ty.

Siſter of Peace and Indolence, Bring, muſe, bring numbers

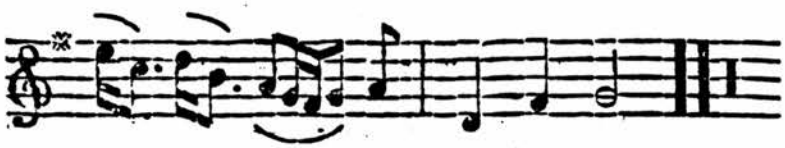


ſoft and ſlow; E-la-borately void of ſenſe, And

ſweet-

Illus. VIII. Boyce, "Idleness. A Song", in [Ritson], A Select Collection (1783), III, sigs. [2] E7r-v.

ſweet—ly thought—leſs let them flow;



ſweet—ly thoughtleſs let them flow.

Song XVIII. From the court to the cottage convey me away. [Carey.

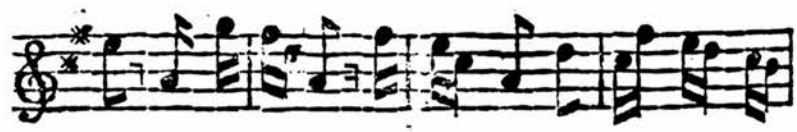
Set by the author.

Moderato.

From the court to the cottage con—vey me a-

way, For I'm wea-ry of grandeur and what they call

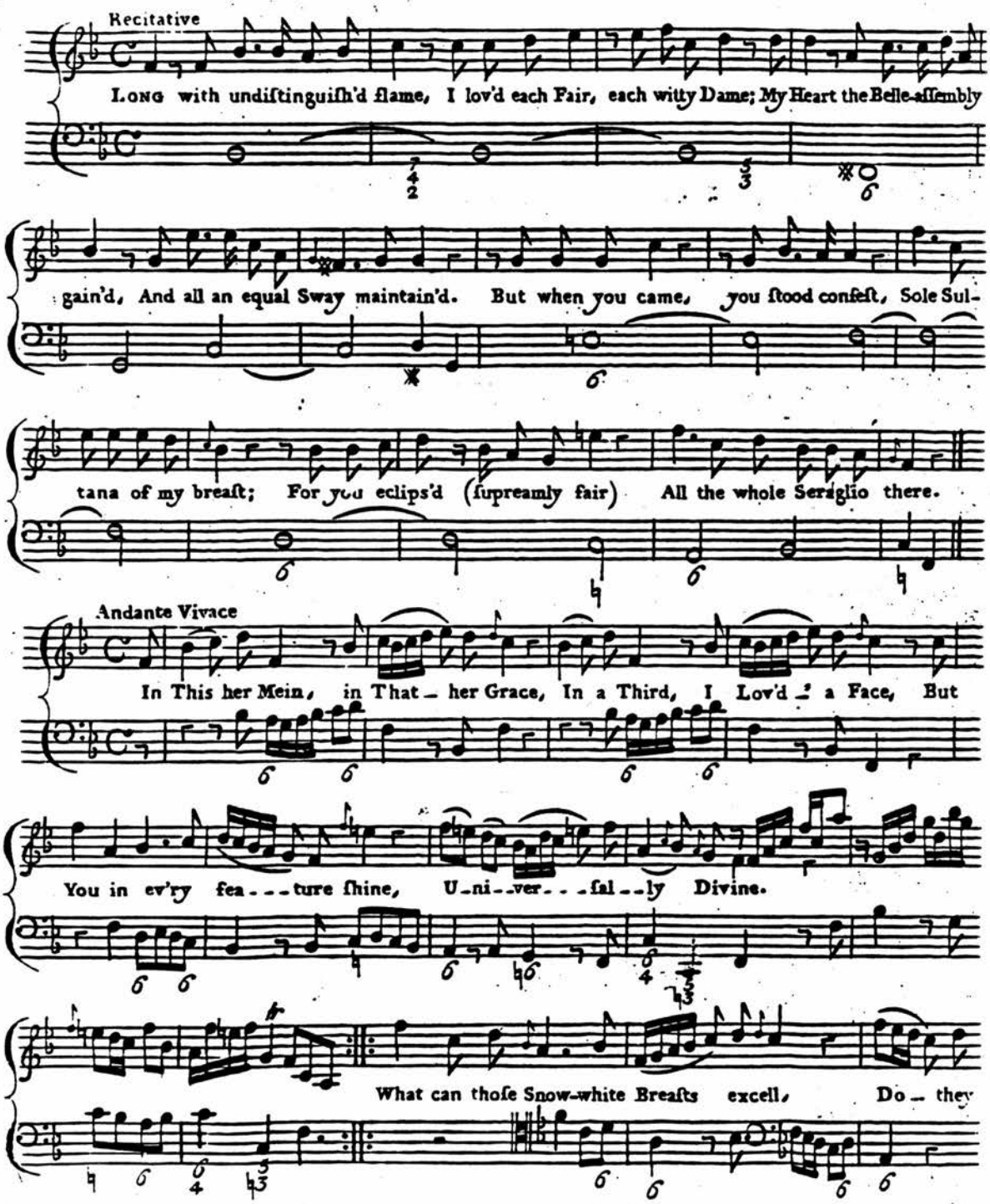
gay; From the court to the cottage con-vey me a-



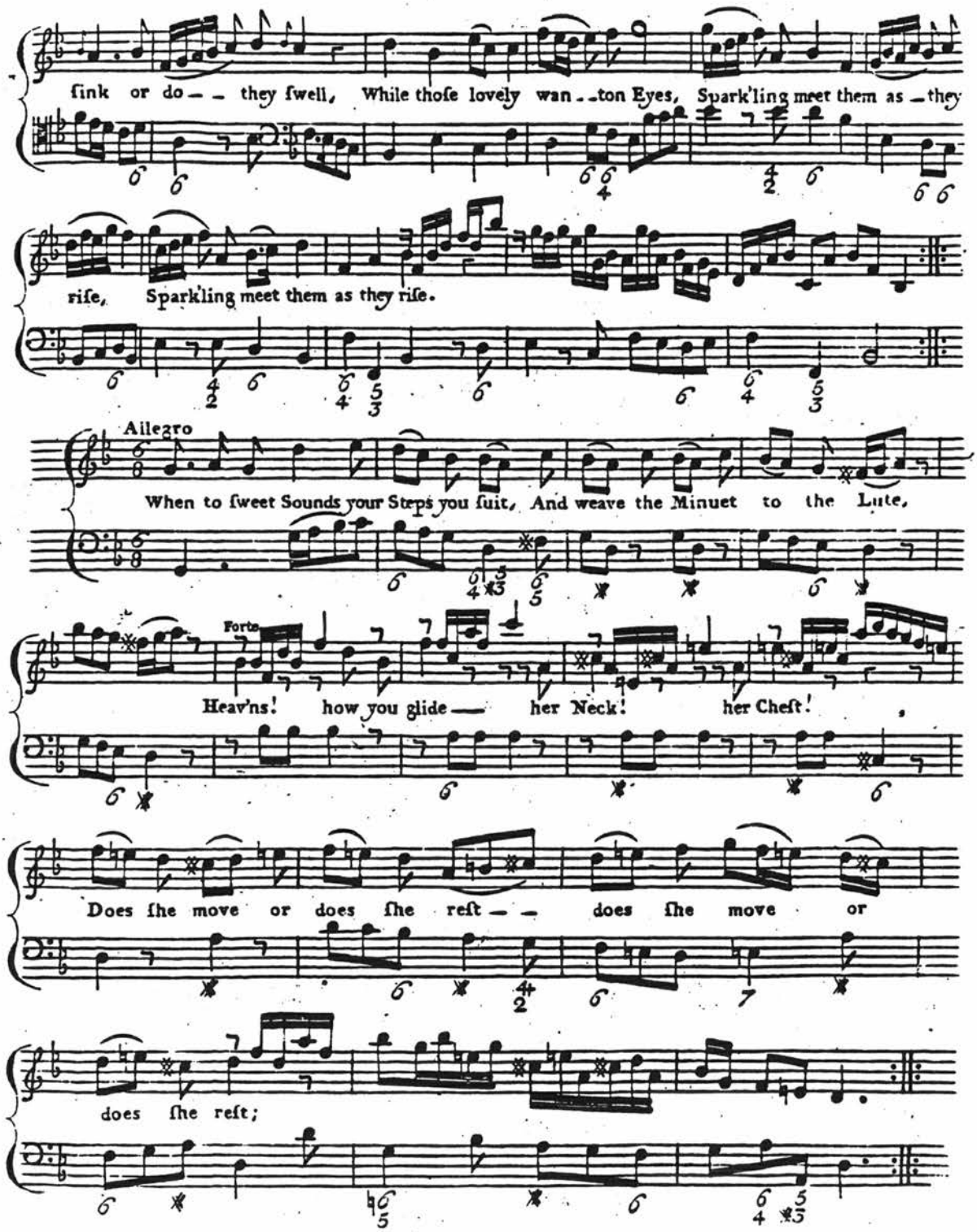
way, For I'm wea-ry of grandeur and what they call

gay:

CANTATA



Illus. IX. Boyce, ["Long with undistinguish'd flame"] [1747], Lyra Britannica. Book I, pp.18-21 [reduced]. B.L. Mus. Mic. 1250.



Illus. IX contd.

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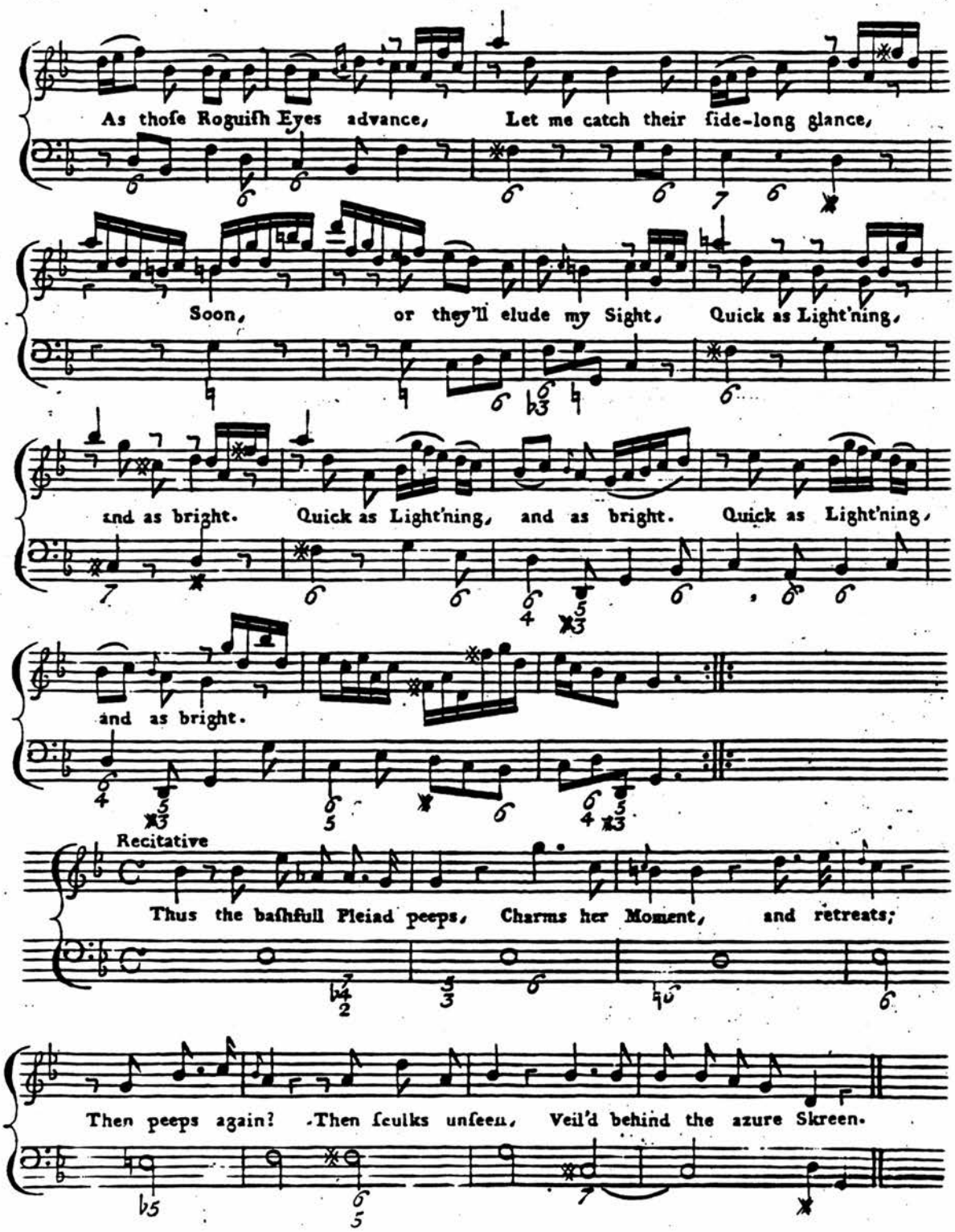
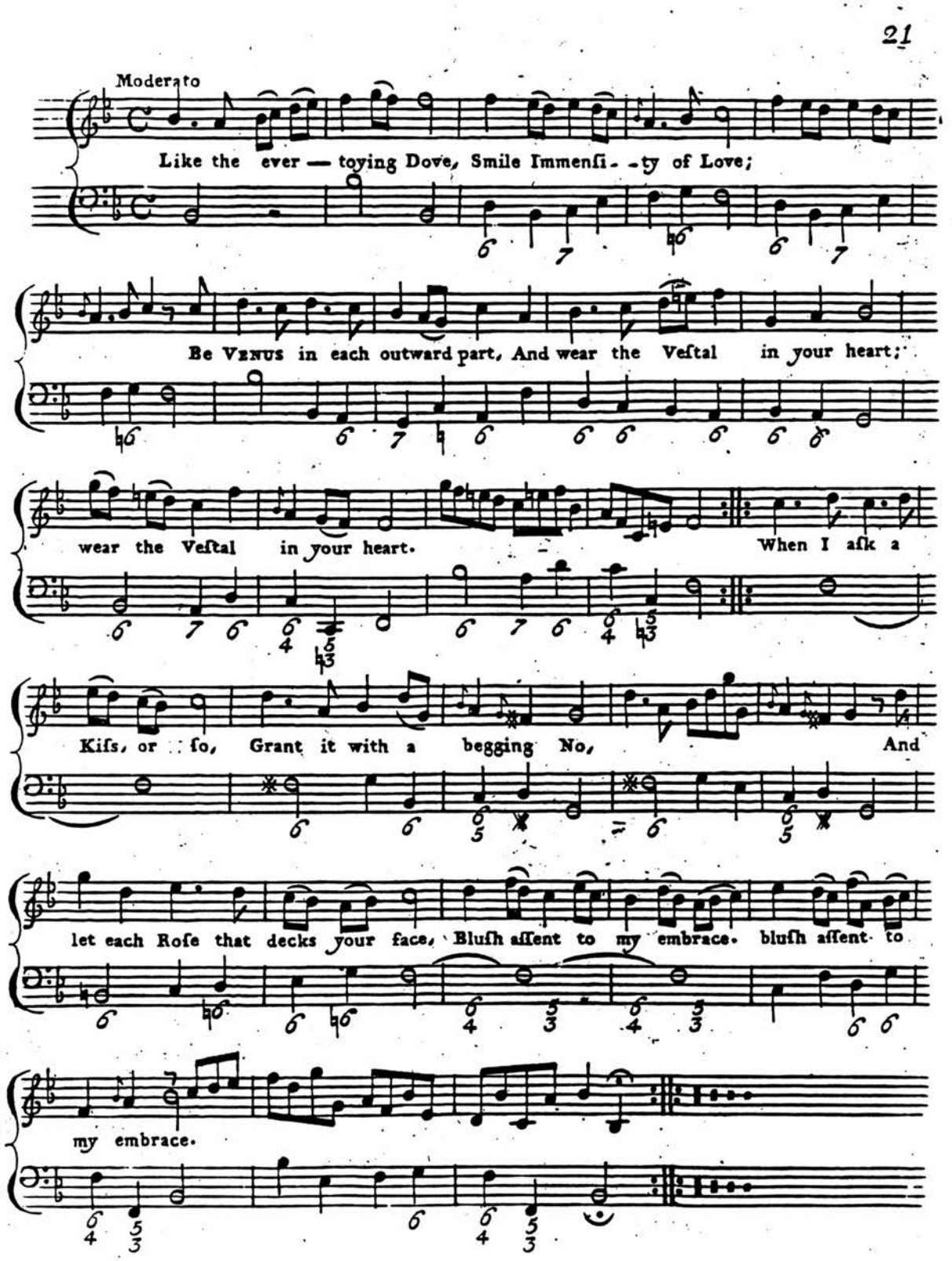


Illus. IX contd.



Illus. IX contd.

"supreamly fair", after which the "whole Seraglio" is dismissed in a short, gratuitous vocal phrase.

The first air introduces a distinctive rhythmic and melodic figure in the continuo at bar one, which is transferred to the melody in the succeeding bar and sustained throughout. Indeed, this interplay of vocal and instrumental lines, reinforced by canonic imitation at the entries "What can those Snow-white Breasts" and "Do they sink", indicates a unitary musical conception not normally encountered in comparable pieces. The substitution of "Snow-white Breasts" for the more audacious "tumid Paps" of the Midwife printing, is presumably out of deference to the sensibilities of a mixed audience.[46] A transition to $\frac{6}{8}$ time and to g minor for the succeeding dance-like air supplies that element of contrast implicit in the cantata form, which is heightened by the number and variety of figures that Boyce incorporates into his musical texture. The sinuous semitone movement at bars two to four, and again, at ten to twelve, parallels the descriptive nuances of Smart's verse, as does the composer's imaginative treatment of the exclamations beginning "Heav'ns! how you glide". The punctuation of text by short ritornellos further emphasizes the inter-dependence of melody and accompaniment, and varied repetitions of the final vocal phrase loosen the rigid pulse of Smart's quatrains.

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46 "To Miss A———n" was printed in The Midwife: Or, Old Woman's Magazine, 3 vols. (London, [1751]-53), II (1751), No. 1, 36-38. The fifth stanza from this printing is omitted in the musical setting.

The second recitative moves quickly through implied E♭ major, c minor and F major tonalities, to close with a cadence in the relative minor. This rapid utilization of successive key centres within a single tonal scheme, is a feature of Boyce's settings. Whatever his songs lack in sheer melodic tunefulness is in part redressed by their vigour and variety. A return to E♭ major tonality and a stately four-square measure provides an appropriate framework for Smart's final two stanzas. Here the continuo part is severely curtailed to provide only a bare harmonic outline. Inversion of the melodic fragment in bar seven to reappear eight bars later, provides a thematic bridge between the two quatrains. The vocal line, however, displays neither the flair nor the grace of the foregoing arias. An awkward g minor cadence at bar ten, and conversely, a resolute g minor section beginning "Grant it with a begging No", weaken the overall melodic and harmonic balance, which is barely redeemed by an understated final cadence in the tonic key.

The second of Smart's two lyrics to appear in Lyra Britannica was printed in the fourth volume, which was published in 1751 or 1752.[47] Here the scoring of the upper strings is unusually explicit, and includes a fully-written-out viola part. This circumstance, together with the instrumental directives forte and piano, and the inclusion of amendments to verses two and three that emphasize the caesura of Smart's line, indicate that the song was conceived for set vocal forces, and

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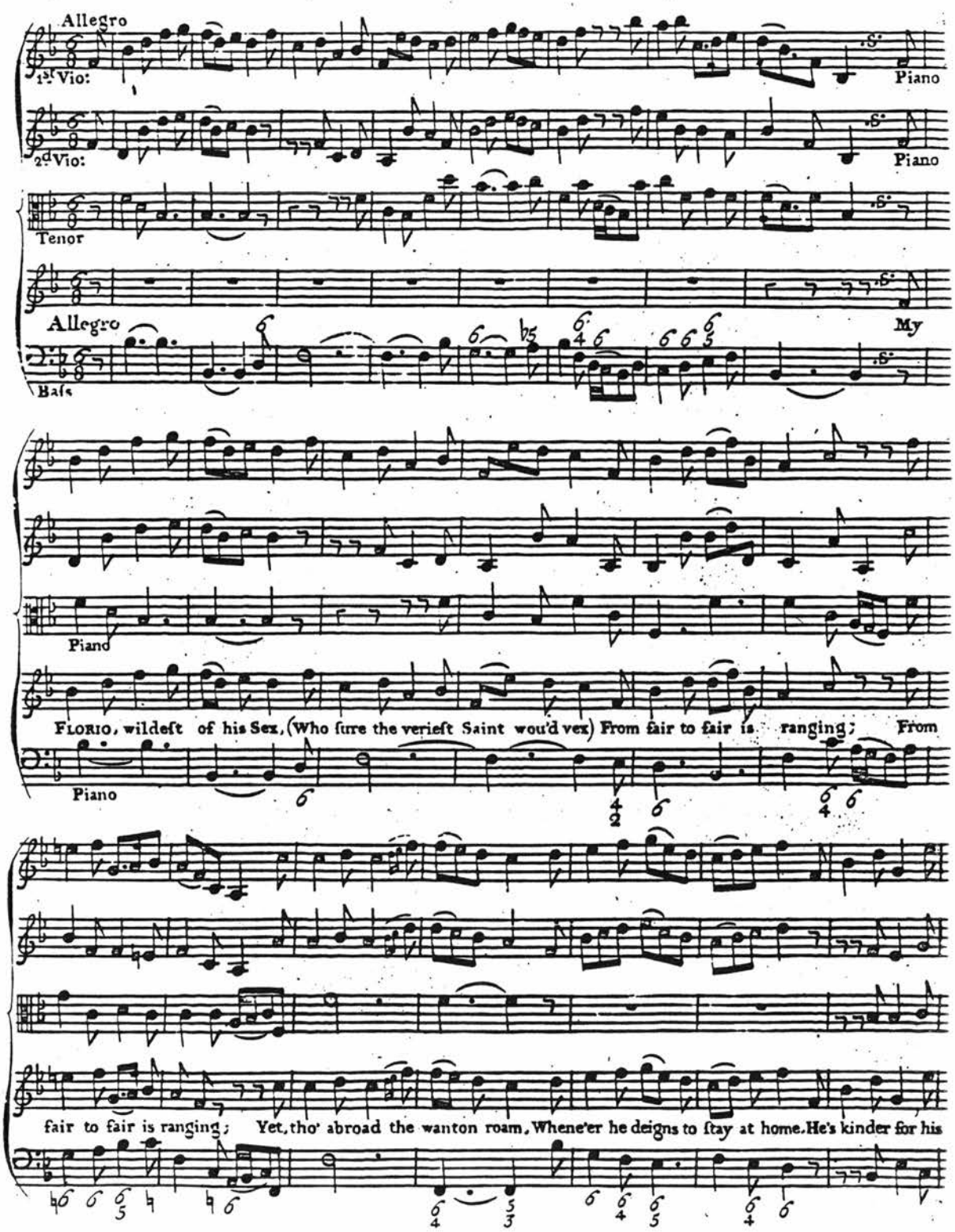
47 "The Decision", in Numb: IV. Lyra Britannica. A Collection of English Songs Compos'd by Dr. Boyce (London, [c.1751]), pp. 65-66. See Illus. X. Boyce received his doctorate in 1749.

241 65

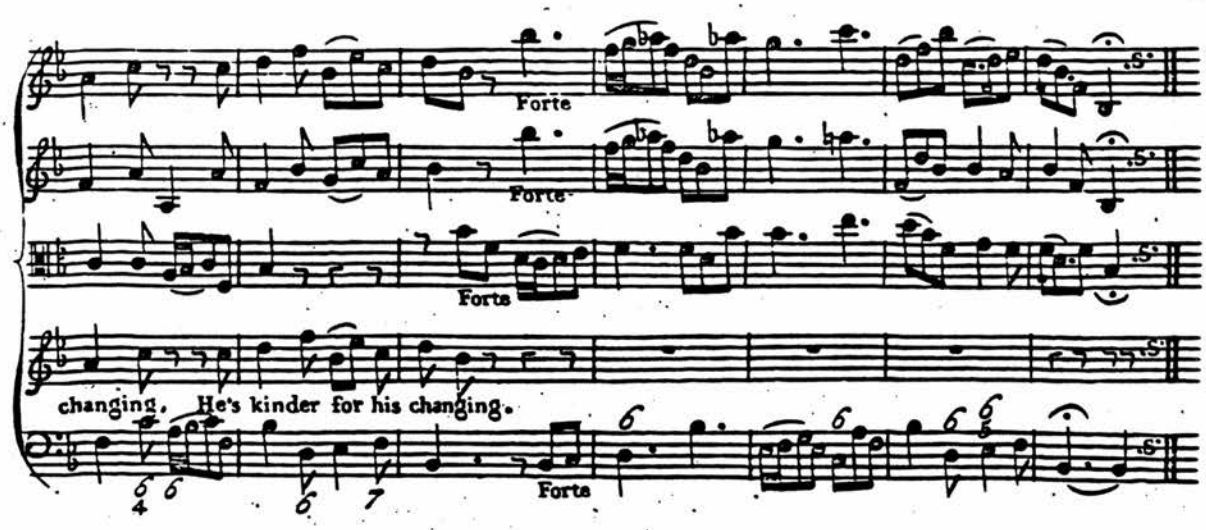
The Decision.



Illus. X. Boyce, "The Decision" [c.1751], Lyra Britannica. Numb. IV, pp.65-66 [reduced].

24

66

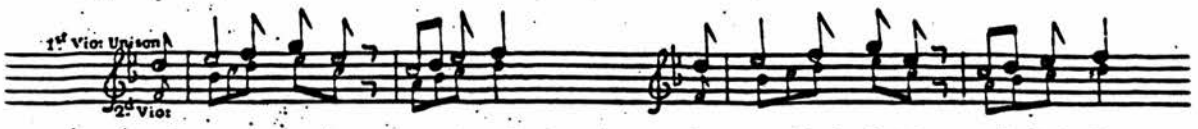


2

Tho' ſomething to each charming ſhe,
In thoughtleſs prodigality,
He's granting ſtill and granting. S.
To PHILLIS that, to CLOE this,
And ev'ry Madam, ev'ry Miſs,
Yet I find nothing wanting. S.

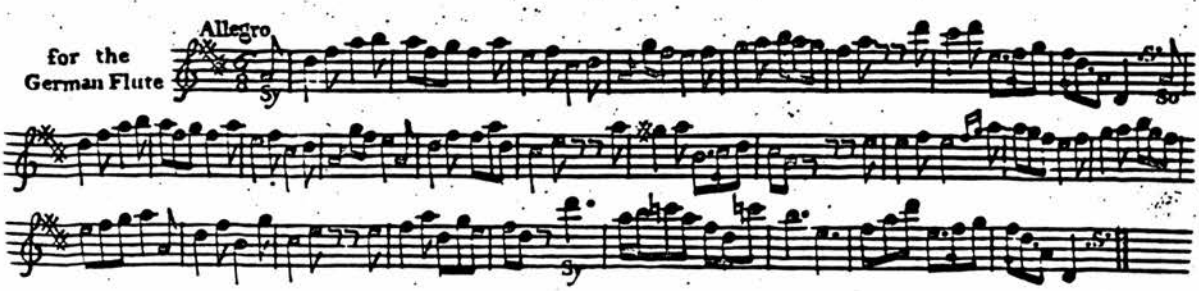
3

If haply I his will diſpleaſe,
Tempeſtuous as th'autumnal Seas
He foams and rages ever. S.
But when he ceaſes from his ire,
I cry, ſuch ſpirit, and ſuch fire,
Is ſurely wond'rous clever. S.

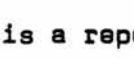


4

I ne'er want reaſon to complain,
But ſweet is pleaſure after pain,
And ev'ry joy grows greater; S.
Then truſt me, damſels, whilſt I tell,
I ſhou'd not like him half ſo well,
If I cou'd make him better. S.



Illus. X contd.

probably for a particular occasion. The "orchestral" conception of an accompaniment remarked on earlier, is here apparent in the exact duplication of the vocal melody as the first violin part. The continuo line, on the other hand, is especially skeletal, and assumes no real independence of rhythm or figuration; the only distinctive sub-motif, viz.  , is a repetition of the viola part, either at the same pitch, or at an octave's displacement.

An opening eight-bar "symphonie", which apart from a flattened leading note at bar five remains in the tonic throughout, ushers in the verse proper. The first six bars are built entirely on tonic and dominant harmonies; only on the restatement of "From fair to fair" does Boyce introduce a subdominant chord. This harmonic restraint is matched by a melody which hardly develops beyond the arpeggiated leaps of the primary triads. Boyce's treatment of the second half of Smart's stanza is more imaginative, however, and in performance the singer would doubtless insert a rallentando on the phrase "to stay at home" (and its equivalents) to heighten the personal response to each final line. The abrupt vocal cadencing on the recapitulation of lines three and six, again, is a whimsical touch which would make for effective characterization in execution.

That Boyce remained disposed to set Smart's poems a decade after "Idleness" first appeared, is attested to by the publication of "[Ode to] Lady Harriote" in The Gentleman's Magazine

for 1755.[48] The text of "Lady Harriote" dates, of course, from an earlier period in Smart's life, though it was not published in any collection of his poems until the posthumous volumes of 1791.[49] Boyce's strophic setting adopts a fanfare rhythm which is first sounded in the  figure of the instrumental introduction, and which is continued in the trumpet-like treatment of the words "Begin ye nine a grateful air". The composer's handling of the cadence point on the words "can't excel" is a harmonic weakness, but discounting this blemish, his expressive use of vocal ornaments, strong progressions and a well scaled vocal line together render "Lady Harriote" among the most musically attractive of Boyce's songs. The orchestral triplets provide an effective bridge to the $\frac{6}{4}\ \frac{5}{3}$ cadences, and soften the otherwise robust four-square rhythms.

The final song to be considered presents a host of problems in the areas of textual authorship and authenticity, the discussion of which is best confined to an appendix (See No. IV). Even the identity of the composer has generated a discrepancy which may, however, be more easily determined. There are three single sheet folio copies of "The Ravish'd Lover" in the British Library Music Division, all of which are bound into large collections of miscellaneous songs and

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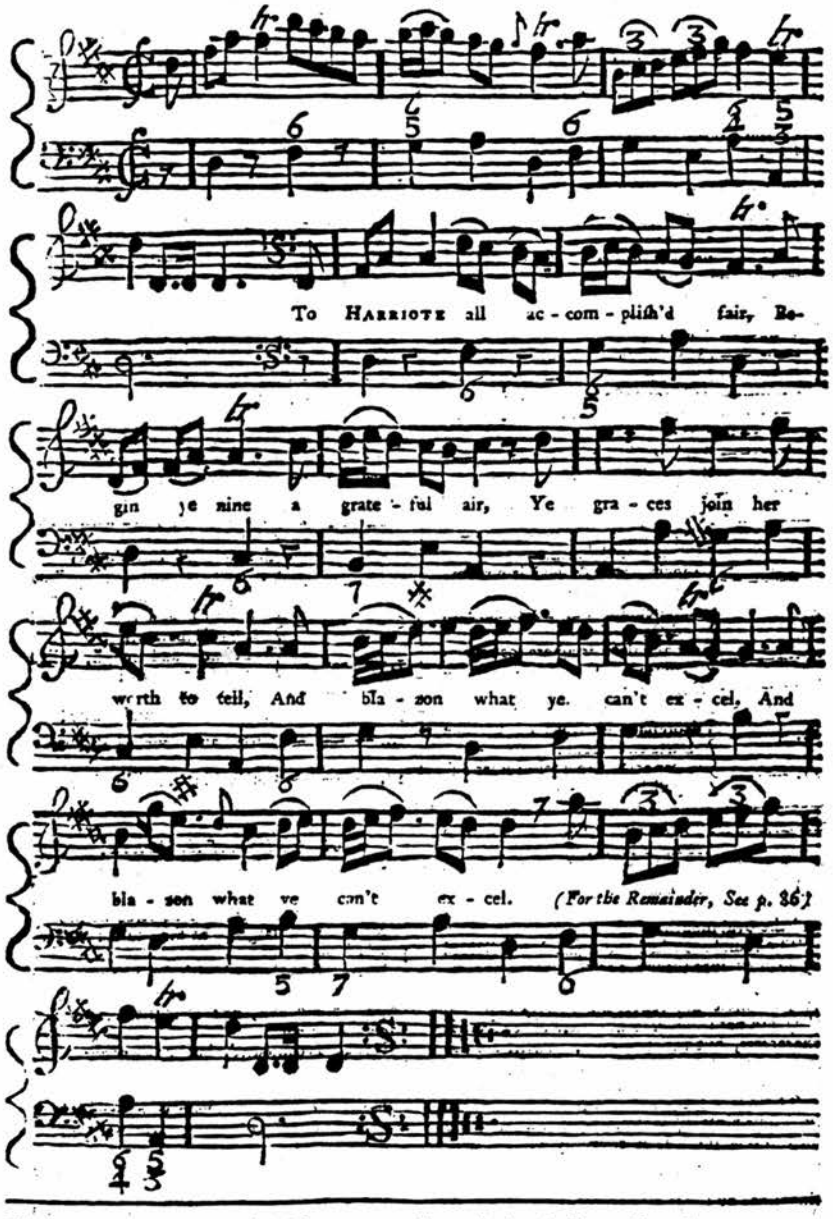
48 Vol. XXV (April 1755), 178. Only the first verse is given; the complete text is printed in the February issue for this same year, p. 86, and signed C.S. See Illus. XI.

49 The text was also printed in The Midwife (1751); the circumstances which gave rise to the poem belong to a year or two earlier.

178 *Lady* HARRIOTE *in* Feb. *Magazine. Set by Dr* BOYCE.



(*For the Remainder, See p. 86.*)

The COUNTRY 'SQUIRE, *and the* MANDRAKE.

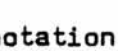
A FABLE.

THE ſun had rais'd above the mead,
His glorious horizontal head;
Sad *Philomela* left her thorn,
The lively linnets hymn'd the morn,
And nature, like a waking bride,
Her bluſhes ſpread on ev'ry ſide:
The cock (as uſual) crow'd up *Tray*,
Who nightly with his maſter lay;
The faithful ſpaniel gave the word,
TRELOOBY at the ſignal ſtirr'd,
And with his gun from wood to wood
The man of prey his courſe purſu'd;
The dew and herbage all around,
Like pearls and emeralds on the ground,

The

Illus. XI. Boyce, "Lady Harriote", The Gentleman's Magazine, XXV (April 1755), 178.

ballads.[50] Although the composer's name does not appear on any of the scores, the song has been attributed to William Boyce. "The Ravish'd Lover" to the same setting is printed in a later assemblage, though, and here it appears as "FANNY Blooming Fair. Set by Mr. HOWARD".[51] We may claim the song as that of Boyce, however, not only by reason of the B.L. ascription which has been followed in the British Union and other catalogues, but also through the record of Boyce's first biographer who writes: "Many yet remember the elegant air to which he set the song of Lord Chesterfield's, addressed to Lady Frances Shirley "When Fanny, blooming fair" . . . ".[52]

As the songs at present stand, copies A and B are to all intents and purposes identical. The minor differences in text — "Feature" (A, verse three)/"Features" (B) — or in notation —  (A, bar four)/  (B) — are not substantive, and may be accounted for as printing discrepancies. A comparison of either A or B with C, though, reveals radical variations that suggest some evolution of score, or, more likely, a pirated copy (as remarked earlier, unauthorized reprinting of popular ballads was endemic in the eighteenth century). The

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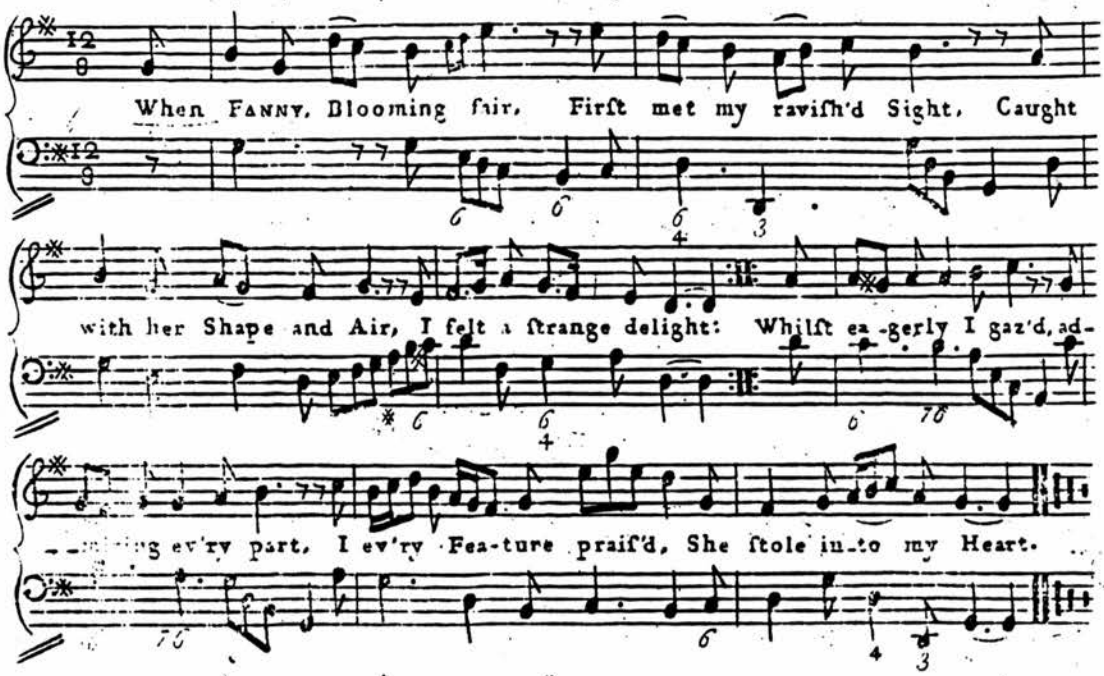
50 ["When Fanny, Blooming fair".] The Ravish'd Lover: Set for the German Flute ([London, 1736?]), s.sh.fol.; henceforth referred to as Text A; The Ravish'd Lover: Set for the German Flute ([London, 1736?]), s.sh.fol.; referred to as Text B; ["When Fanney Blooming fair".] The Ravish'd Lover. Set for the German Flute ([London, 1740?]), s.sh.fol.; referred to as Text C. See Illus. XII, a, b, c.

51 The Muses Delight. An Accurate Collection of English and Italian Songs, Cantatas and Duetts (London, 1754), p. 214. [Henceforth referred to as Text D.] See Illus. XIII.Samuel Howard, sometime organist of St. Clement-Dane's and St. Bride's London, was a contributor to the Collection of Melodies written for Smart's Psalms (1765).

52 Memoirs of Dr. William Boyce. Now first published, in Cathedral Music, 2nd ed. (1788), I, ii.

The Ravish'd Lover

Set for the German Flute.



2

In her bewitching Eyes,
Young ſmiling Loves appear,
There CUPID batking lyes.
His Shafts are hoarded there:
Her Blooming cheeks are dy'd,
With Colour all their own,
Excelling far the pride,
Of Roſes newly blown.

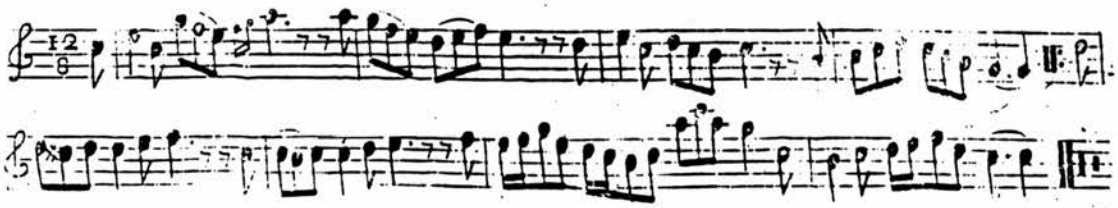
3

Her well turn'd limbs confeſs
The lucky hand of Jove,
Her Feature all expreſs,
The Beauteous Queen of Love:
What Flames my Nerves invade,
When I behold the Breaſt
Of that too lovely Maid,
Riſe ſuing to be preſt.

4

VENUS round FANNY's waſte,
Hath her own Ceſtus Bound,
With Guardian CUPIDS grac'd,
Who ſport the circle round;
How happy will he be,
Who ſhall her Zone unloſe,
That bliſs to all but me,
May Heav'n and ſhe refuſe.

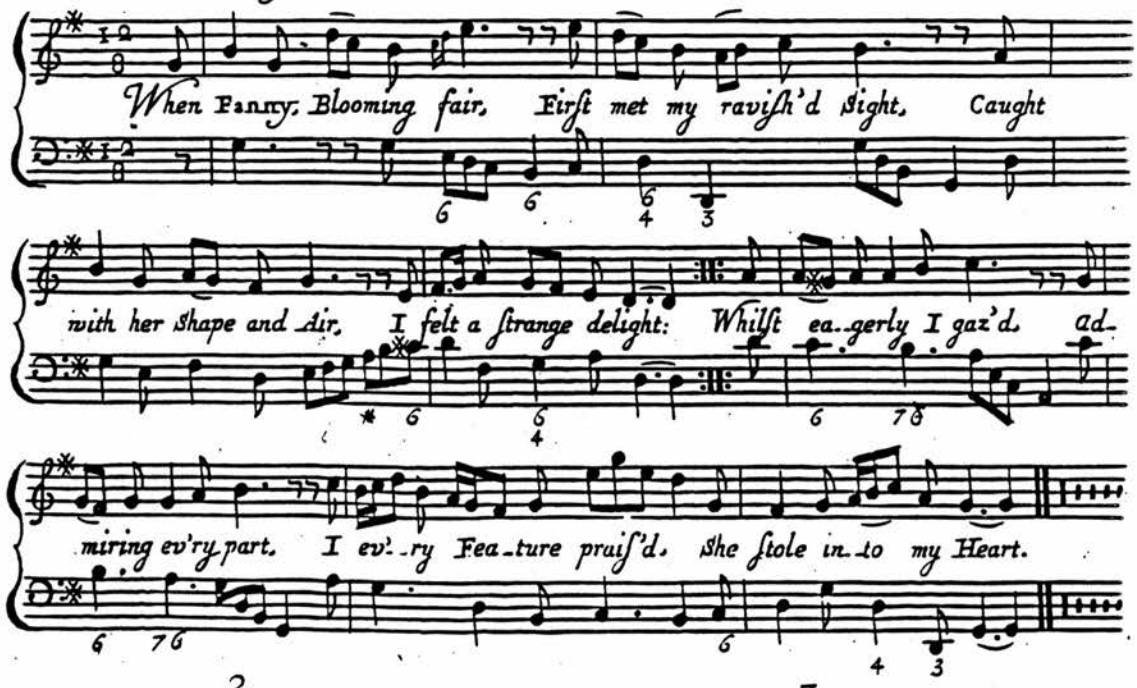
For the Flute



Illus. XIIa. Boyce, "The Ravish'd Lover" [1736?], s.sh.fol. [reduced]. B.L. G313(108). Text A.

The Ravish'd Lover 257

Set for the German Flute.



2

In her bewitching Eyes,
Young ſmileing Loves appear,
There Cupid baſking lyes,
His Shafts are hoarded there;
Her Blooming Cheeks are dy'd,
With Colour all their own,
Excelling far the pride,
Of Roſes newly blown.

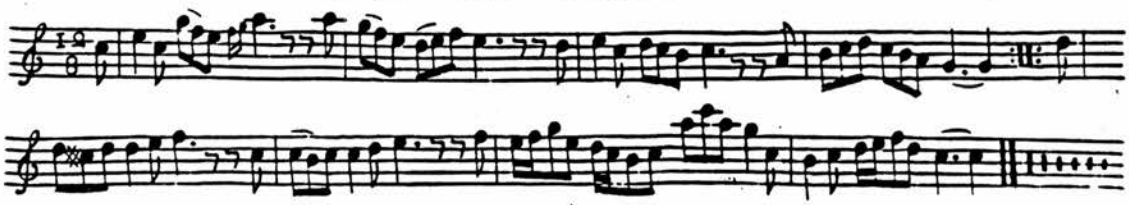
3

Her well turn'd limbs confeſs
The lucky hand of Jove,
Her Features all expreſs,
The Beauteous Queen of Love;
What Flames my Nerves invade,
When I behold the Breaſt
Of that too lovely Maid,
Riſe ſuing to be preſt.

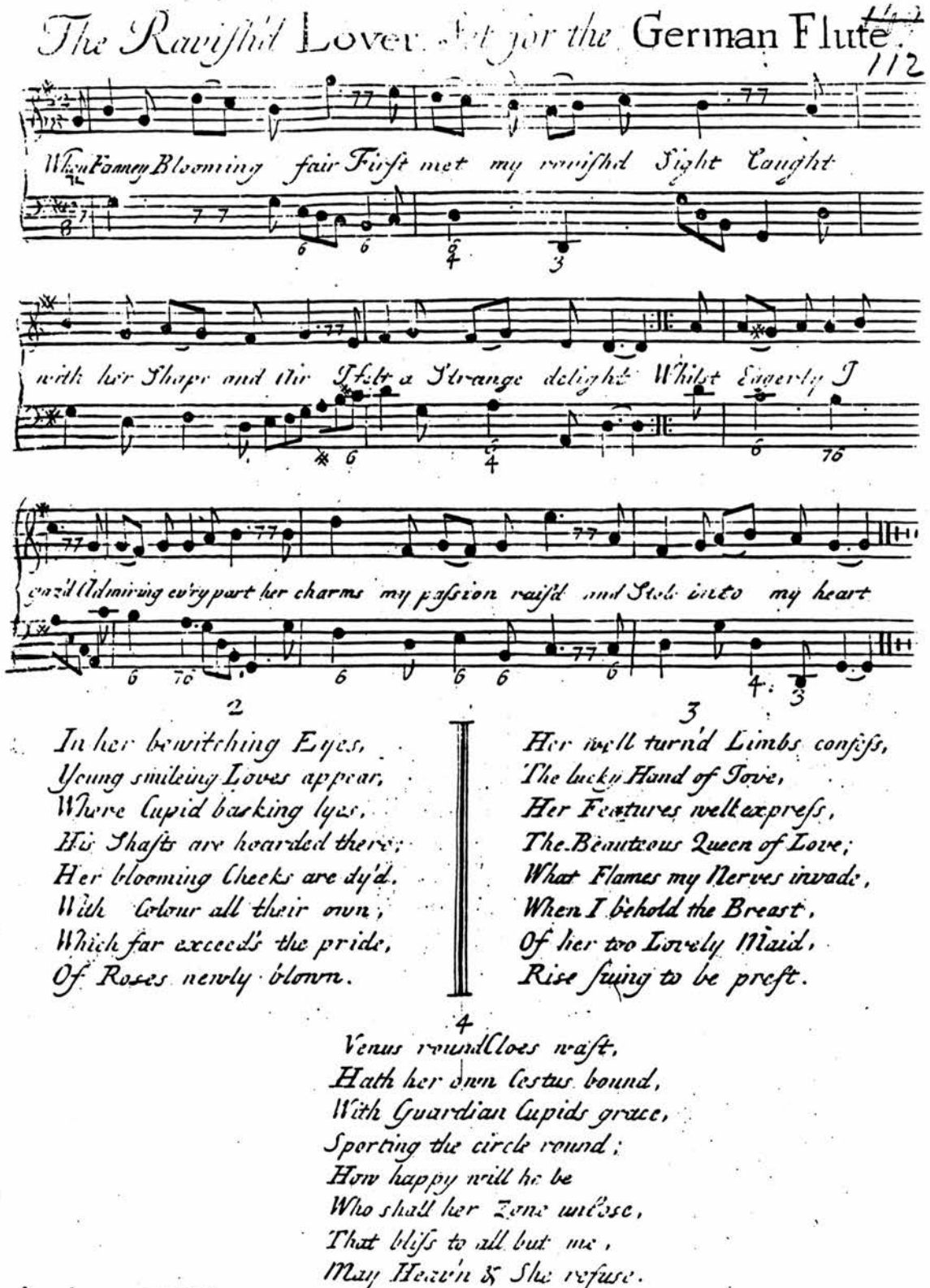
4

Venus, round Fannys waſte,
Hath her own Ceſtus Bound,
With Guardian Cupids grac'd,
Who ſport the circle round;
How happy will he be,
Who ſhall her Zone unloſe,
That bliſs to all but me,
May Heav'n and ſhe refuſe.

For the Flute



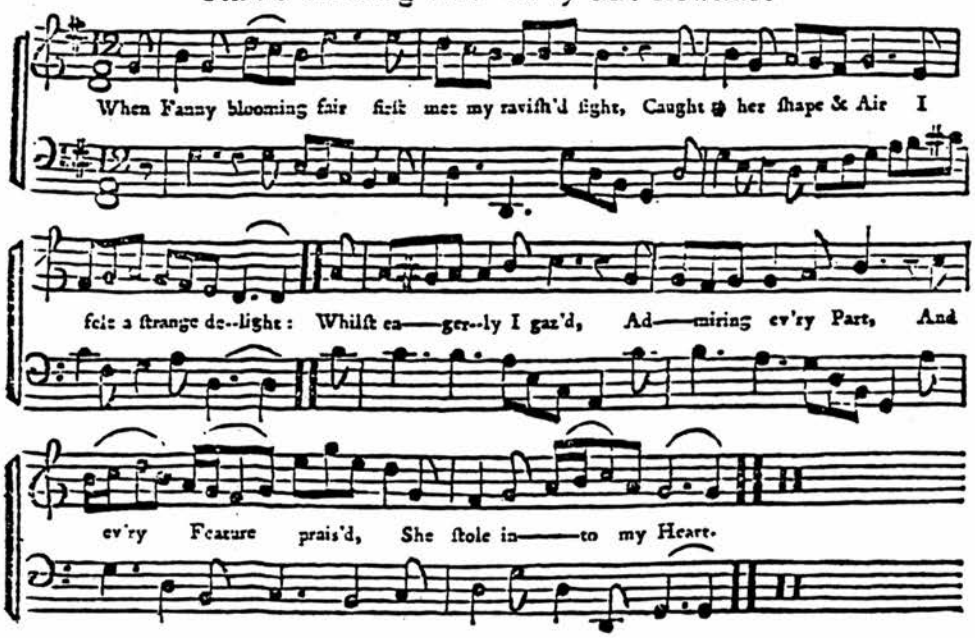
Illus. XIIb. Boyce, "The Ravish'd Lover" [1736?], s.sh.fol. [reduced]. B.L. G.305(220). Text B.



Illus. XIIc. Boyce, "The Ravish'd Lover" [1740?], s.sh.fol. [reduced]. B.L. G.316(112). Text C.

The Muſes DELIGHT.

FANNY Blooming Fair. *Set by Mr.* HOWARD.



2.

In her bewitching eyes
Ten thouſand Loves appear;
There *Cupid* basking lies,
His ſhafts are hoarded there.
Her blooming cheeks are dy'd
With colours all their own,
Excelling far the pride
Of roſes newly blown.

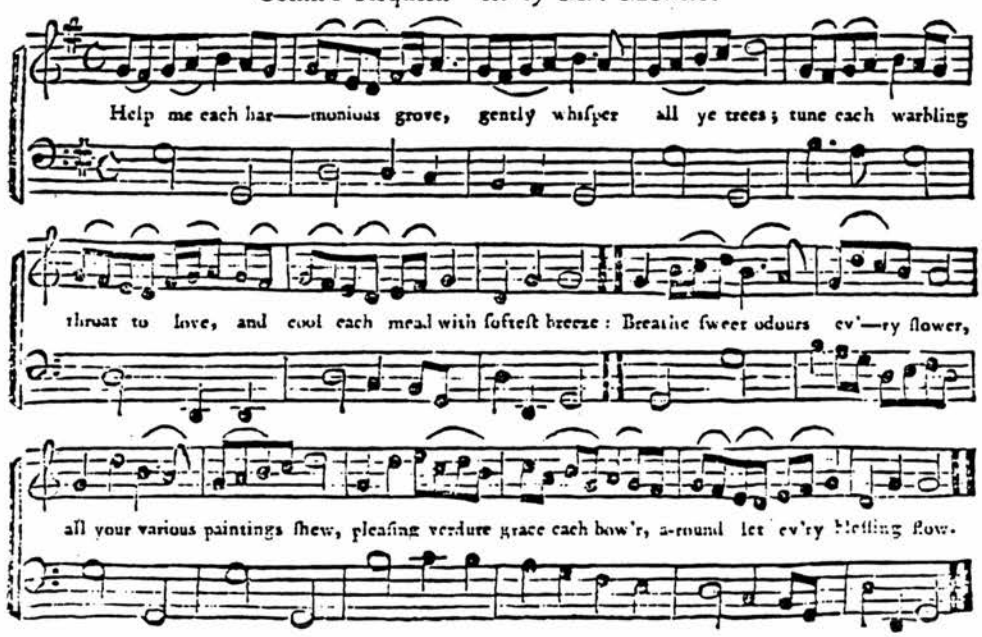
3.

Her well-turn'd limbs confeſs
The lucky hand of *Jove*;
Her features all expreſs
The beauteous queen of love:
What flames my nerves invade,
When I behold the breaſt
Of that too charming maid
Riſe, ſuing to be preſt!

4.

Venus, round *Fanny*'s waiſt
Has her own ceſtus bound,
With guardian *Cupids* grac'd,
Who ſport the circle round:
How happy will he be
Who ſhall her zone unlooſe!
That bliſs to all but me
May heav'n and ſhe refuſe.

Collin's Requeſt. *Set by Mr.* MONRO.



Illus. XIII. Howard, "Fanny Blooming Fair", in The Muses Delight (1754), p.214. Text D.

musical inconsistencies are no less obvious, most especially the melodic treatment of bars four and seven and the corresponding harmonic adjustments.

Score D is not an exact transcript of A, but is closer in text and music to this copy than to C. Musically the two scores are identical, except for the more modern notation in D, an absence of ornamentation, and regularization of the quaver/semiquaver figure in bar four of A. There is little to remark upon in Boyce's simple, lyrical setting. The melodic line is finely contoured, the harmonic progressions strong, and the sequential imitation at lines five and six appropriate to the words. The obvious climax point of the penultimate bar, heightened in performance, no doubt, by a vocal and instrumental allargando, renders the artlessness of the final phrase the more effective.

It is clear from the foregoing discussion that Smart's reputation was greatly enhanced by Arne's and Boyce's settings of his poems. If occasions for reciprocity were limited, Smart could nevertheless acknowledge the composers' musical supremacy both directly and indirectly: either through explicit panegyric, or by including their songs in periodicals brought out under his editorship. His early satirical work The Hilliad: An Epic Poem,[53] was a thinly-disguised attack

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53 The Hilliad: An Epic Poem (Dublin, 1753). The Hilliad, in turn, provoked The Smartiad, A Satire (London, 1753), which opens: "HAIL S——T! Thou great Inspirer of my Lay!/(If a dull Muse can prompt me what to say)" (ll.1-2). The Monthly Review dismissed The Smartiad as "A jumble of mere nonsense" (VIII (February 1753), 151). Both poems were advertised in The London Magazine, XXIII (February 1753), 96.

on the learned, but posturing and quarrelsome, Dr. John Hill, supposed author of an unflattering review of Smart's Poems on Several Occasions (1752).[54] This "humorous but abusive performance" as The Monthly Review described it,[55] might seem an unusual vehicle for eulogy. But in the closing pages Smart wrote:

> 'And sense and taste and nature shall agree,
> While love shall live, and rapture shall rejoice,
> Fed by the notes of Handel, Arne and Boyce. . . .'
>
> (ll. 251-53)

A footnote appended to these lines elaborated the reference as follows: "The first of these gentlemen may be justly looked upon as the Milton of musick, and the talents of the two latter may not improperly be delineated by calling them the Drydens of their profession, as they not only touch the strings of love with exquisite art, but also, when they please, reach the truly sublime" [p.46].

Boyce appears to have been particularly singled out for praise. One number of The Inspector — which magazine was issued as a Supplement to The Student, Volume Two — recounted the funeral of a well known philanthropist, Thomas Coram. The burial service, conducted in the Foundling Hospital chapel on 3 April 1751,

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54 See The Monthly Review, VII (August 1752), 131-43.

55 Vol. VIII (February 1753), 151. The reviewer further remarked: "we are sorry to see [Smart] so deeply engaged in such dirty work" (loc. cit.).

> was sung by the gentlemen belonging to the choir of St. Paul's, which was composed by doctor Boyce, who played the same on a small organ set on one side of the chapel; and when the minister had read all the service but the last collect, an anthem composed by Dr. Boyce, was sung by Mr. Beard, Mr. Mence, and Mr. Savage, and the chorus parts by the other gentlemen of Westminster and St. Paul's.[56]

Boyce's anthems were referred to again in The Midwife of this same year,[57] and his serenata Solomon surfaced unexpectedly in "The journal of a modern beau", as printed in Mother Midnight's Miscellany. Under the heading "Thursday Morning", the reader might muse upon the self-enriching activities of a dandy: "Hum'd over a song in Solomon".[58]

Perhaps less gratifying to the composer was the anticipated performance of an "Overture by Dr. Boyce" during the course of the "Grand Concert of Vocal and Instrumental Musick", which was offered in conjunction with Smart's Old Woman's Oratory.[59] And the poet's choice of the "Prologue" and "Epilogue" to Arne's masque Alfred, as copy for The Midwife pages, is an unusual one.[60] The last literary project which Smart undertook before his breakdown, however, provided him with

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56 The Inspector: Containing A concise and impartial Collection of News, &c. ([Oxford], 1751), No. 3, p.24.

57 The Midwife, II No. 6, 245.

58 Mother Midnight's Miscellany (London, 1751), p. 11. This collection of amusing anecdotes is probably the "paultry Pamphlet" disowned by the original Mary Midnight in a concluding advertisement to Vol. I No. 3 of The Midwife [1751]. See also The General Advertiser, No. 5036, 11 December 1750, [fol. 2].

59 The General Advertiser, No. 5371, 6 January 1752, [fol. 2].

60 The Midwife, I No. 6, 274-79. The "Prologue" was spoken by Garrick, and the "Epilogue", which ended with a "Dance to the Pipe and Tabor", by Mrs. Clive.

a means of discharging his debt of gratitude. For the editors of The Universal Visiter (Smart and Rolt), in addition to serious undertakings, pledged to acquit themselves "in the various and entertaining characters of poet, painter, player, and musician".[61] In a series of letters brought back from "the illustrious dead" by one Mr. Bencraft, and directed to the exclusive "use of the proprietors of . . . The Universal Visiter", is a communication "From Mr. Purcel, [sic] to Dr. Boyce". By this means Smart could heap laurels upon the head of his benefactor:

> Your sonatas, your Solomon, your songs, and above all your anthems, Corelli . . . declares he should be proud to own. Go on, and let not music be any longer reckoned a foreign accomplishment. An ENGLISHMAN encouraged is invincible, as well in arts as in arms. BRITAIN STRIKE HOME! was (you know) of my setting; and were I disposed to reject that manly, alarming air, you should be the only man that I would permit to set it after me. . . .
>
> P.S. Orpheus, Amphion, Timotheus, and Corelli, descrie their best respects.[62]

This strain of somewhat ostentatious patriotism which may be discovered throughout Smart's poems, recalls a few lines from his "Variety of well-season'd Jests, Epigrams, Epitaphs, &c." published under the title of The Nut-Cracker:

> Some say, that Signior Bononcini,
> Compar'd to Handel's a meer Ninny;
> Others aver, that to him Handel
> Is scarcely fit to hold the Candle.
> Strange, that such high Disputes shou'd be,
> 'Twixt Tweedledum and Tweedledee.[63]

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61 The Universal Visiter, [p.3].

62 Ibid., pp. 22, 24.

63 "The Musical Contest", in Ferdinando Foot [Christopher Smart], The Nut-Cracker (London, 1751), p.25. The lines quoted are those of John Byrom (c.1725).

But The Universal Visiter also had an instructive and proclamatory role, and each number ended with a song written by a contemporary composer. There are no fewer than three such musical pieces by Boyce,[64] together with the texts of two further odes by Cibber (on the King's Birthday and the New Year), also set by Boyce.[65] And in the issue for October the editors printed the "Prologue" to Eliza, "set to Music by Mr. Arne; now performing in the Manner of an Oratorio".[66] Clearly Smart, who exalted "gratitude" above all other virtues, was not disposed to forget those friends who had assisted him in the past.

To conclude this survey of Smart's earliest years in London society, by 1750 he had seen a number of his lyrics taken up by the two foremost English-born composers of the age, and performed in the most illustrious of settings. He was on familiar terms with a cross-section of London notables,[67] and had forged particular alliances with many of Vauxhall Gardens's musical and literary employees. Indeed, the comprehensive list of subscribers to his Poems on Several Occasions (1752), which had been advertised in the first

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64 The Universal Visiter, No. 2 (February), between pp. 96 and 97; No. 6 (June), between pp. 284 and 285; No. 8 (August), between pp. 384 and 385.

65 Ibid., No. 11 (November), pp. 523-24; No. 12 (December), pp. 565-66.

66 Ibid., No. 10, pp. 475-76.

67 "He enjoyed . . . the familiar acquaintance of . . . most, who were then celebrated for genius, or for learning": Rev. Christopher Hunter, ed., The Poems, of the Late Christopher Smart, 2 vols. (Reading, 1791), I, xix.

Seatonian Prize Poem,[68] indicates the extent of his connections. Soon, in the guise of Mother Midnight, he was to initiate and preside over a cluster of farcical tavern and theatre entertainments, into which he threw himself with a degree of increasing freneticism. His contributions to, and editorship of, various periodicals provided an opportunity for more measured reflections on literature and the arts; a control underscored by his Seatonian submissions, through which he maintained a precarious link with Cambridge. It is appropriate, then, to examine these several aspects of Smart's conduct, character and achievements, before pausing to consider the circumstances that led to the catastrophe of 1756.

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68 "Proposals for Printing by Subscription, A Collection of Original Poems, By Christopher Smart, M.A.", in On the Eternity of the Supreme Being (Cambridge, 1750), [pp. 15-16]. Orders were to be taken by booksellers in London, Oxford, Durham, York and Cambridge.

CHAPTER THREE LONDON 1750–1756

> In short, the Plan so often has been varied,
> So many Schemes been try'd, and all miscarried,
> That scarcely now another Change remains,
> In Words, in Music, or Dramatic Strains: [1]

Any attempt to assess the extent of Smart's musical contacts and activities during the years 1750 to 1756, is rendered more complex by the bewildering array of literary and theatrical projects in which he was practically engaged. In some cases, his authorship or degree of involvement remains conjectural; in others that he instigated or contributed to a particular enterprise is well documented and consequently indisputable. In the latter category belongs his Occasional Prologue and Epilogue to Othello, As it was acted at the Theatre-Royal in Drury-Lane, On Thursday the 7th of March 1751, By Persons of Distinction for their Diversion.[2] The author's dedication to the work reads: "To Francis and John Delaval, Esqrs. This Prologue and Epilogue, Written By their Desire, and For their Entertainment, Are humbly inscribed By their obliged Friend Christopher Smart" [p.3].

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1 "Prologue On Mrs. Midnight's Oratory", in Mrs. Midnight's Orations; and Other Select Pieces; As they were spoken at the Oratory in the Hay-Market, London (London, 1763), pp. 29–30.

2 Published in London, 1751, and sold by Thomas Carnan at Newbery's in St. Paul's Churchyard. Would-be copiers were warned: "This Pamphlet is enter'd in the Hall Book of the Company of Stationers, and whoever presumes to pirate it, or any Part of it, will be prosecuted as the Law directs" [p.2]. Two further editions followed in the same year.

Smart's association with the Delaval brothers had its genesis in Cambridge some five years previous, when John Blake Delaval was admitted to Pembroke Hall.[3] His intrigues and escapades were notorious throughout the college, and climaxed in a "little Misfortune" described by Gray in exquisite detail, and which abruptly terminated the university career of "poor dear M^{r} Delaval".[4] Francis Delaval enjoyed a similarly colourful youth, but eventually acquired a measure of respectability after his creation as a Knight of the Bath in 1761. Their more temperate younger brother Edward, an experimental philosopher and sometime Fellow of Pembroke, was reputed to have devised the most complete set of musical glasses then known in England.[5] All three brothers bespoke copies of Smart's Poems on Several Occasions (1752), and their continuing friendship is evidenced by subscriptions to his Psalms volume of 1765. For his part, Smart penned a graceful verse tribute to Lady Hussey Delaval (wife of John), which he entitled "Female Dignity";[6] dedicated his version of Phaedrus (1765) to Master John Hussey Delaval; and inscribed his poetic translation of Horace (1767) to Sir Francis Delaval.

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3 It is commonly asserted that Smart was engaged as a private tutor to John Delaval, but there is no conclusive evidence to support the claim.

4 Correspondence of Thomas Gray, ed. Paget Toynbee and Leonard Whibley, 3 vols. (Oxford, 1935), I, 260–61.

5 Ibid., I, 353, n.12; II, 664, 766.

6 "Female Dignity, Inscribed and Applied to Lady Hussey Delaval" appeared in Poems on Several Occasions (London, [1763]), p.9.

As to Smart's role in the proceedings, there is obviously a direct link between A Trip to Cambridge (1747) and this performance of Othello. The later production, however, exposed him to a much wider audience, and one, moreover, that embraced many of London's wealthiest patrons and men of letters, for the Delavals themselves were notably well connected. Originally destined for the Little Theatre in the Haymarket, Othello was redirected to Drury Lane;[7] the performers "having been much importuned by their friends and acquaintances for tickets, they found a larger house would be necessary."[8]

The occasion was clearly a glittering and successful one. The select audience of a thousand was vociferous in its appreciation, and the performance itself raised considerable expectations among the contributors to contemporary periodicals. The Gentleman's Magazine for March 1751 printed two glowing accounts,[9] the first of which described the "band of musick" as "a very fine one", and noted that the evening was conducted "with all the pomp and decoration of the most regularly concerted entertainment of the kind". The second review similarly recorded that "The best musical hands that could be had were added to the playhouse band". Smart's Prologue, spoken by John Delaval in the character of Iago was judged "excellent", and the Epilogue as delivered by Desdemona, "hardly at all inferior to it".[10]

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7 The run of Alfred (Arne) was consequently interrupted, and the next performance deferred until 9 March.

8 The General Advertiser, 6 March 1751, [fol. 2]. The issue for 7 March announced the publication of Smart's Prologue and Epilogue the following day.

9 "Observations on the late Performance of Othello", in Vol. XXI (March 1751), 119-21; "From the London Evening Post. Another Account", as supra, 121-22.

10 Ibid., pp. 120, 121.

Smart himself was quick to endorse the universal acclaim. The second number of his Inspector published the following meretricious report: "On Thursday the 7th of this instant, the tragedy of Othello was perform'd at Drury Lane . . . to the most brilliant audience that perhaps ever was assembled upon any occasion. The whole performance was truly admirable, and merited all the applause that was or could be given it".[11] And in a satirical piece of self-aggrandizement, The Midwife carried "A Letter from Mr. Smart. To Mrs. Midnight [that is, Smart himself] in London" concerning the "dame's" intention of printing his Prologue and Epilogue, which the author was magnanimous enough to allow: "when a Work of Merit is printed in your Magazine, it is a Brilliant set in Gold and increased, not diminish'd in its Lustre". Mrs. Midnight received this permission graciously, and the two pieces duly appeared in the same issue.[12]

A third résumé, however, directed to the editor of The Gentleman's Magazine by a Cambridge correspondent signing himself B.C., was highly censorious, both of the actors' conception, and of Smart's particular contribution:

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11 The Inspector: Containing A concise and impartial Collection of News, &c. ([Oxford], 1751), No.2, p.13. Under the subtitle "Domestic News" this same aperçu was printed in The Midwife: Or, Old Woman's Magazine, 3 vols. (London, [1751] - 53), I [1751], No. 6, 285.

12 The Midwife, I No. 6, 270, 271-73. The Occasional Prologue and Epilogue was also published in The London Magazine, XX (March 1751), 136-37).

> I wish the world had not known that this prologue and epilogue were written by a gentleman, who has hitherto been esteem'd a genius and a scholar; for nothing but the publication of them wth his name, would have convinced the world that he was the author; and it is hoped that he will consider before it is too late, that even genius and learning, prostituted to such service, must at length lose their dignity, and be regarded only as the tools of those who hire them for their use.[13]

And shortly afterwards, A Satirical Dialogue . . . Address'd To the Gentlemen who deform'd the Play of Othello appeared, declaring its intent in the opening quatrain:

> While heedless Fops, affecting to be Sage,
> With awkward Attitudes Disgrace the Stage;
> Ours be the Task to Paint the Simple Elves,
> And shew the Race of Triflers in our Selves.[14]

But these attacks were exceptional, and it is unlikely that Smart was unduly perturbed by them. Besides, by this time he was deeply involved in two thriving periodical concerns, one of which he characteristically puffed in a concluding advertisement to his Prologue and Epilogue. The sixth number of The Midwife, he promised, "will certainly be published the 16th of this Instant March; and will compleat the first Volume of that elaborate Undertaking, so necessary for all Families, and for Gentlemen and Ladies Pockets".[15]

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[13] Vol. XXV (March 1751), 122-23 (p.122).

[14] [William Kenrick?], A Satirical Dialogue Between A Sea Captain and his Friend in Town (London, [1751]), p.3. The work was recorded in the "Register of Books" appended to The Gentleman's Magazine, XXI (March 1751), 142.

[15] Occasional Prologue and Epilogue, p.8.

Under what circumstances the fantastic notion of a magazine presided over by a befuddled old bawd was hatched, can hardly be imagined. If other collaborators were involved at the start, and Richard Rolt was certainly an early contributor, the major impetus came from Smart, who is named in Fanny Burney's Early Diary as "author of the 'Old Woman's Magazine'".[16] The style and constitution of The Midwife are encapsulated in its extended title, and few additional preliminaries are necessary: The Midwife, Or the Old Woman's Magazine. Containing all the Wit, and all the Humour, and all the Learning, and all the Judgement, that has ever been, or ever will be inserted in all the other Magazines, or the Magazine of Magazines, or the Grand Magazine of Magazines, or any other Book whatsoever: So that those who buy this Book will need no other.[17] Any doubts that the reader might have entertained as to authorial design, were quickly despatched in the Preface, which was signed by Fardinando Foot (one of Smart's pseudonyms). The journal, the writer claimed, was "not wrote because the following stupendous Performance required it, but, modestly speaking, to shew my own Wit".[18]

Notwithstanding this satirical resolve, both The Midwife and The Student fulfilled several functions. They circulated poems by Smart and his confrères; advertised divers theatricals and

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16 The Early Diary of Frances Burney 1768-1778, ed. Annie Raine Ellis, 2 vols. (London, 1889), I, 24.

17 The Midwife was printed by Carnan and sold at Newbery's shop.

18 Vol. I, 1.

works of literature; commended a number of London luminaries and writers; and provided serious reflections on the arts in general. By implication, the papers also define the nature of Smart's connections, and reveal some associations which have not previously been remarked upon. Each monthly issue of The Midwife, for instance, published an essay from the Rambler, a periodical which the editor deemed "worthy the Patronage of all Gentlemen of Taste and Genius".[19] This championship of Johnson's literary venture recalls a note to Boswell's Life, contributed by Charles Burney. Here the musician states that "The Ramblers certainly were little noticed at first. Smart, the poet, first mentioned them to me as excellent papers, before I had heard any one else speak of them. When I went into Norfolk, in the autumn of 1751, I found but one person . . . who knew any thing of them".[20] And Fanny Burney further recorded that anecdotes of Smart contained in Boswell's Life, were passed to the biographer by her father.[21]

Smart could also directly promote his friends' musical ventures, as he did in the case of Arne and Boyce. In the fourth number of The Midwife, he published "A Dissertation on

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19 The Midwife, I No. 1, 16. In Vol. II (1751) the Rambler again was said to merit "the utmost Attention and Encouragement of the Publick" (No.2, 81). Note also The Student, Or, The Oxford and Cambridge Monthly Miscellany, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1750, 1751), which described the essays as exceeding "any thing of the kind ever published in this kingdom" (II, 3).

20 James Boswell, The Life of Samuel Johnson, 3rd ed. [ed. Edmond Malone], 4 vols. (London, 1799), I, 177n. The Rambler was printed in Burney's final months of London residence and during his first year at King's Lynn (March 1750 to March 1752).

21 Madame D'Arblay, Memoirs of Doctor Burney, 3 vols. (London, 1832), I, 281.

Dumb Rhetoric: Or, the Language of the Limbs, with some Account of Queen Mab, which is now acting with astonishing Applause, at the Theatre-Royal, in Drury-Lane. By Mrs. Midnight".[22] The libretto of Queen Mab was penned by the actor Henry Woodward, whose theatrical profession had begun at Covent Garden under John Rich. In 1748 he joined Garrick at Drury Lane, and here he devised six pantomimes for performance between 1750 and 1756. It was almost certainly owing to Burney's influence that Woodward, whom Smart mentioned in the course of this essay, subscribed to his Poems on Several Occasions (1752).[23] Mrs. Midnight also commended "Mr. Collet, who with Orpheus's Skill, falls to Work, in order to tweedle Harlequin into Existence; his Skill has the desired Effect, and Harlequin comes to Life gradually to a very pretty Tune".[24] Richard Collet (fl. 1737-1765), one of London's foremost violinists, had led the Vauxhall orchestra from about 1745 to 1748, and afterwards appeared regularly in the Haymarket and Drury Lane bands. He is known, for instance, to have taken the first violin part in "A Concert of Musick" which was performed at the Little Theatre in the Haymarket on 29 January 1748. There is evidence of his continuing activity at Drury Lane Theatre as late as 1767, which implies an executant vocation spanning some thirty years. Smart's tribute to his talents is far from arbitrary, for he, too, is listed among Smart's 1752 subscribers.

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22 The Midwife, I No. 4, 145-51.

23 Ibid., 149-50; Smart again refers to "my Friend Harry Woodward", and prints a prologue written and spoken by the actor in The Midwife, III (1753), No.1, 15, 25-27; also III No.4, 142.

24 The Midwife, I, 147. For Burney's estimation of Collet, see History of Music, IV (1789), 668.

Poet and musician probably met at Vauxhall by way of the Burney/Arne connection; moreover, they were both signatories to a transaction involving Jonathan Tyers (lessee of the Gardens), which was witnessed on 1 June 1750.[25]

A more enduring relationship, and in terms of future ramifications second only to that forged with Burney, was Smart's association with "my Friend Mr. Garrick", who is invoked in this same article.[26] David Garrick (1717-1779), actor, patentee, theatre manager and playwright, arrived in the capital in 1737 to work initially as a wine merchant. He embarked upon an acting career three years later, and so rapid was his advancement, that by the mid-1740s he was the most fêted actor in the kingdom. Following a brief excursion to Dublin, he returned to London in 1742, in the company of Thomas Arne and his sister Susanna Maria Cibber; the last-named a highly accomplished singer/actress with whom Garrick was to have a lasting professional attachment. He performed in masques for which Arne supplied the music, and acted at both Covent Garden, and more particularly, Drury Lane, at which theatre he became manager and joint patentee in 1747. His participation in other musical interludes brought him into contact with numerous writers, musicians and dancers, as in his productions of The Fairies [from A Midsummer Night's Dream] (1755) and The Tempest (1756),[27] both to music by

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25 See Sherbo, Christopher Smart, Scholar, p.60.

26 The Midwife, I, 146.

27 "An Account of the New English Opera, taken from Shakespear's Tempest, Dryden, &c." is given in The Universal Visiter, [sic] and Memorialist (London, [1757]), No. 2 (February 1756), pp. 81-87. Mr. Beard (Psalms subscriber) is listed among the cast.

J.C. Smith.[28] It is impossible to assess accurately the extent of his advocacy; it is reasonable to assume, however, that in soliciting subscriptions for Smart's Poems (1752) from London's musical and literary élite, his influence was profound.

Nor was his friendship short-lived. As Smart's first editor remarked: "Of Mr. Garrick's extreme parsimony much has been told. . . . To this opinion may be opposed the fact of his offering to Mr. Smart, when under the pressure of severe distress, the profits of a free benefit at Drury-Lane Theatre".[29] This charity performance of 3 February 1759 comprised a double bill of Meropé and The Guardian, the latter a two-act comedy in which Garrick himself assumed the major role. The accompanying programme note was more explicit about the nature of Smart's "severe distress": "For the Benefit of Mr Cris[r] Smart, an Ingenious young Man in poetry, but now confin'd in a Mad house".[30]

Poet and actor could have been introduced by several means. Garrick, together with a few friends, had established a social club centred on a tavern in St. Paul's Churchyard, and he may may have encountered Smart here in the late 1740s. Again,

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28 On the scope of Garrick's musical activities, see Roger Fiske, English Theatre Music in the Eighteenth Century (London, 1973), pp. 205-51. Mrs. Garrick, a former dancer, also subscribed to Smart's Poems.

29 Rev. Christopher Hunter, ed., The Poems, of the Late Christopher Smart, 2 vols. (Reading 1791), I, xix-xx.

30 Quoted in The London Stage 1660-1800. Part Four: 1747 -1776, ed. George Winchester Stone, Jr., 3 vols., III (Carbondale, Illinois, 1962), 709. The benefit raised approximately £285.

Burney had first met Garrick in the latter half of 1744, when he [Burney] was living with the Arnes; it is quite conceivable that Smart was numbered among visitors to the household. Or they may have come together at the home of Fulke Greville, a wealthy amateur musician, who took Burney into his service in 1746, after buying out the remaining articles of apprenticeship from Arne. Greville, it may be noted, also subscribed to Smart's Poems on Several Occasions (1752), almost certainly on Burney's recommendations. Other possibilities inhere in Burney's friendship with the Cibbers, whose coterie embraced a cosmopolitan mix of actors, wits, musicians and men of letters. Garrick's intimacy with Mrs. Cibber has been noted; Burney greatly admired her vocal abilities,[31] and she, in turn, subscribed to Smart's Poems. And of course the possibility of contact through pleasure gardens, theatres or taverns, remains a strong one.

For Smart's part, the plaudits he bestowed on Garrick were many and generous. The Midwife printed a number of occasional prologues as spoken by the actor,[32] and a fulsome tribute is entered under the title: "A Letter from Mrs. Mary Midnight, to David Garrick, Esq.". The dame opens expansively: "you have not, in the whole Metropolis, a greater Admirer than I am", and closes with a compliment to his personal charity:

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31 She "captivated every hearer of sensibility by her native sweetness of voice and powers of expression" (History of Music, IV, 657).

32 The Universal Visiter also printed an epilogue written by Garrick and spoken by Mrs. Cibber, in No. 3 (March 1756), 147-48.

"Such considerable Sums given to the Poor, shews you are as good a Man as an Actor, and must effectually silence the Calumny of your Enemies, that wou'd accuse you of the Vice of Avarice". Smart, in fact, anticipated Garrick's efforts for his future well-being by belauding his "giving so many Benefit Plays to Persons in Distress".[33] An extended essay in a later volume of this same magazine again asserted that Garrick's "Alacrity and Diligence in promoting and attending to the Interest of his Performers, has been singularly great, and uncommonly generous".[34] And Mrs. Midnight was always willing, of course, to exert her considerable influence in the vicissitudes of London's most exalted dramatic figures:

> While Garrick smart, and blustring Barry jar,
> Like rough and smooth, or Oil and Vinegar,
> I, like an hard-boil'd Egg come in between,
> And mix their Matters, as I intervene.[35]

Neither actor could have objected to such transparently pretentious banter, which merely confirmed their eminence without hint of authorial maliciousness.

The remaining subject matter of The Midwife that pertains to music, perpetuates this same stylistic disharmony, which intermixed parody and wit with didacticism and discourse.

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33 The Midwife, I No.2, 87-88. See also The Universal Visiter, No. 1 (January 1756), 23.

34 "Some Reflections on the State of the Stage", in II No.2, 74-80 (p.77). Johnson also testified to Garrick's liberality at the height of his career: see James Boswell, The Life of Samuel Johnson, 2 vols. (London, 1791), II, 84-85.

35 The Midwife, I No.1, 40.

In the former category belongs Mrs. Midnight's address to "the Clappers, Hissers, and Damners, attending both Theatres", in which she exhorted them to more radical dramatic reforms: "demolish the Orchestre and the Fiddles, pelt the Players and hiss the Author!". Or, affecting a more scientific cast of mind, she directed an epistle "to the Royal Society, containing some new and curious Improvements upon the Cat-Organ". Her innovations seem well-considered: "A plain Harpsichord, which instead of having Strings and Jacks, consists of Cats of different Sizes, included in Boxes, whose Voices express every Note in the Gamut, which is extorted from the imprison'd Animals, by placing their Tails in Grooves, which are properly squeez'd by the Impression of the Organist's Fingers on the Keys". She herself never had fewer than "eight Geldings in my treble Clift", and recommended castration, by which operation an English cat might be rendered as mellifluous as its Italian counterpart: "after the Operation, my Country Animal had every whit as delicate, piercing, and comprehensive a Tone as the Foreigner". After describing various mechanisms for obtaining special effects in dynamics, ornamentation and touch, she concluded in a flurry of panegyric: "Happy that Instrument, where Terror and Transport, Ornament and Utility are so exquisitely blended: — Which, by its persuasive Harmony, can, at one Time, draw St. Cecilia from the Spheres; and, at another, with proper Alteration, wou'd frighten away the Devil himself in propria Persona". And in order to exhibit the prowess of the instrument to her readers, Mrs. Midnight

appended a gigue-like tune which she entitled "Mrs. Midnight's Maggot. A new Country-Dance for the Cat-Organ".[36]

But The Midwife's pages also allowed Smart to reflect more soberly on the entertainers and entertainments of the age. A footnote to his "Occasional Prologue spoken at Covent-Garden Theatre", for instance, remarked upon a child flautist, [Benjamin Hallet] "said to be but Four Years of Age, [who] has been introduced on the Stage of Drury-Lane Theatre, to play a Tune on that Instrument". Similarly, the editor singled out Miss Jenny Cibber, who, "if a proper Regard is paid to her Modesty and Merit, I make no Doubt she will become an exceeding good Player". On the subject of pantomimes Smart found much to admire, for there was "an Intention and a Plot in the worst of them, and Nature in this Sort of Drama is rather disguised than banished". And an especially illuminating statement on masque — a "fashionable Practice among our antient Nobility and Gentry" — is found in another issue. Here the writer extols this synthesis of several forms of artistic expression, which, regulated by taste, might raise a purer pleasure than that evoked by diversions à la mode:

> Nothing could be a more delightful or rational Method of spending an Evening than this . . . Poetry, Painting, and Musick, were here united in their highest Perfection. It were to be wish'd that our modern People of Distinction would revive this excellent Practice, and substitute it in the Place of Routes and Masquerades. But, in the present Age, the Idea of the true Decorum seems to be utterly extinct; and even the Dignity of human Nature seems to be quite over run with the false Refinements of affected Elegance, and all

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[36] Ibid., I No. 2, 79-80 (p.80); I No. 3, 98-103.

> the inconsistent Fopperies of studied
> Folly.[37]

It seems reasonable to conclude that The Midwife enjoyed a good distribution during its two-and-a-half-year run, from the first issue of 16 October 1750 to its last in the spring of 1753. Smart's outrageous claims for the universal fame of author and magazine need hardly be taken seriously: "such is my Reputation among the Literati; so much I am esteemed by the Members of every Faculty; and such Deference is paid to my Judgment by all Nations, all People, all Languages, and all Religions; that no Determination but mine can be decisive".[38] Nor should Mrs. Midnight's apparent knowledge of the internal constitutions and political structures of foreign powers, as evidenced in a regular column entitled "The Midwife's Politicks: Or, Gossip's Chronicle of the Affairs of Europe", be regarded as anything other than satire. Nevertheless, the fecundity of mind and pen that produced such an array of references and associations, was to engender an even more astonishing multitude of allusions a decade later, by way of the Jubilate Agno fragments. And there is a decided aptness in Smart's choice of epigram for the title page of The Midwife, Book Two:

> As for my Works in Verse and Prose,
> Perhaps I am no Judge of those,
> Nor do I care what Critics thought 'em,
> But this I know, all People bought 'em.

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37 The Midwife, I No.1, 38-39, 48; No.4, 146; No.3, 125-27. Hallet was to assume an important part in Smart's Grand Concert and Old Woman's Oratory.

38 Ibid., II No.6, 259.

Finally, it is unlikely that Newbery, whose business acumen was proverbial, would have continued his investment had the periodical not generated a satisfactory return.

Smart's second volume (1751) maintained this same vein of compounded wit and gravity. Lest they be unaware of the fact, Mrs. Midnight directed a letter to "all Potentates, Prime Ministers, Politicians, Heads of Houses, Fellows of Colleges, Counsellors and Physicians", announcing completion of her first volume "which has obtained the Sanction, Imprimatur and Encouragement of the Literati of all Nations". Further epistles were despatched to the College of Physicians, Governors of the Foundling Hospital, Society of Antiquarians, and other venerable institutions and personages; at the same time she praised Richard Rolt — "a very good Writer" — and puffed (Smart's) Horatian Canons of Friendship, newly-published by "my good Friend Mr. Newbery".[39]

Smart's most extended piece of burlesque took the form of a letter "To Mrs. Sarah Rowden, Senior Organist of St. Paul's Church, London", which, in turn, introduced an account entitled: "A Genius restor'd; Or the Matter set in a clear Light". Here Mrs. Midnight took the musicians' fraternity to task over their behaviour towards Sarah Rowden, who was employed under the organ loft of St. Paul's to manually

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39 The Midwife, II No.2, 96; No.1, 29; No.4, 169. The Horatian Canons of Friendship (an imitation of Horace's Satire III, Book I), were published by Newbery in June 1750, and signed by Ebeneazer [sic] Pentweazle.

depress the bellows, while the organist went through the motions at the console: "Ay, says another good Woman that stood by: 'Tis very true, Dr. Green is the reputed Organist, and receives the Salary, but Goody Rowden plays the Organ for Forty Shillings a Year". In order to rectify this situation, in which "we [the women] do the Business, and they [the organists] gain the Applause", Mrs. Midnight organised a contest between Handel and Mrs. Rowden. The encounter terminated abruptly, just as Handel was "playing his Coronation Anthem, and for the Sake of Pre-eminence, jigging his Fingers upon the Keys". Upon the sudden and total suspension of all sound, it was discovered that the organist could not continue without the assistance of his "Senior Performer on the Bellows". A truce was consequently approved, whereby the reputation acquired through use and exercise of the organ, should be divided equally between Goody Rowden and the "other Organist, who shou'd jig the Jacks above Stairs". By such means were "my Brother Organists" kept "in proper Order", and any further disputes "now entirely settled, and accommodated to the Satisfaction of both Parties".[40]

Mrs. Midnight's final volume, "To which is added, An Index to Mankind, Which compleats her Works in English", again reassured her readership of their unquestionable discernment:

> Read MIDNIGHT once, and you can read no more,
> For all Books else will seem so mean, so poor!
> Verse will seem Prose — but still persist to read,
> And MIDNIGHT will be all the Books you need.
> (title page)

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[40] The Midwife, II No.6, 244-48.

As most of the matter printed in this collection is bound up with Smart's Old Woman's Oratory, it will be considered later in conjunction with his vaudeville entertainment. But the editor also reproduced a set of "Directions to enable Ladies and Gentlemen to sing in a pleasing and graceful Manner", which having "pleased me so well . . . I was determined to spare a Page for them in my Magazine". The piece concluded with "a few Lines from my Friend Horace, which are a Satire upon the Singers of his Time . . . happily rendered into English by . . . Mr. Ebenezer Pentweazle:

> Nay 'tis the same with all the Coxcomb Crew,
> Of singing Men, and singing Women too;
> Do they not set their Cat-calls up of course?
> The King himself may ask them 'till he's hoarse;
> But would you split their Windpipes and their Lungs,
> The surest Way's to bid them hold their Tongues. [41]

Even when The Midwife finally ceased publication, the persona of Mrs. Midnight was of sufficient renown to spawn several other enterprises under this nom de guerre. Mother Midnight's Comical Pocket-Book (1753), which does not appear to have any literary connection with Smart, was dismissed by The Monthly Review as "scraps of foolish, illiterate verses, and prose of the same stamp".[42] He is thought to have colluded in "The so much talk'd of and expected Old Woman's Dunciad. Or, Midwife's Master-piece. By Mary Midnight", although the actual authorship may be confidently attributed to William Kenrick.[43] The title page announced the piece as

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41 Ibid., III No.3, 105-7.

42 Vol. X (January 1754), 74.

43 Printed by Carnan in 1751, and sold by Stamper, Robinson and Wilson, all of whom subscribed to Smart's Poems (1752). This circumstance, alone, would suggest that the "squabble" was contrived.

"Publish'd pursuant to Act of Parliament, as the greatest Work ever before attempted in any Age, Country, or Language"; and the "Preface", signed by Margelina Scribelinda Macularia, emphasized its authenticity: "the true and genuine Dunciad of Mrs. Mary Midnight" [p.1]. The work's appearance appertains to a series of attacks and counter-attacks waged between Smart and Kenrick. The reality of the purported enmity is highly questionable, however; and since Kenrick subscribed to eight copies of Smart's Psalms, the possibility of any lasting antipathy recedes even further. Smart is also credited with An Index to Mankind, which was advertised as "This day . . . publish'd" in The General Advertiser for 18 April 1752.[44] Another edition, published in Dublin in 1754, conjoined the Index (pp. 9-84) with The Student's Companion (pp. 85-166),[45] and added An Abstract of Curious and Excellent Thoughts in Seigneur de Montaigne's Essays (pp. 167-76).

The second periodical to which Smart was committed, had first appeared in January 1750 under the title, The Student, Or the Oxford Monthly Miscellany. With the issue of 30 June,

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44 The General Advertiser, No. 4560, [fol. 1^{v}]; An Index to Mankind: Or Maxims Selected from the Wits of all Nations, For the Benefit of the Present Age, and of Posterity; By Mrs. Mary Midnight (London, 1751 [1752]). This collection has been incorrectly assigned to 1751.

45 The Student's Companion: Being a Collection of Historical Quotations From the best Ancient and Modern Authors, [compiled by Christopher Smart?] (London, 1748). There are three quotations under the heading "Musick" (pp. 152-53).

it was redesignated The Oxford, and Cambridge Monthly Miscellany; from this point onwards Smart's poems and essays began to appear regularly, and he remained a prominent contributor until the magazine ceased publication in July 1751. As with The Midwife, all London business was transacted by the firm of John Newbery: a circumstance that enabled Smart to sustain both ventures, and even reproduce items from one for inclusion in the other. An early issue of The Midwife, for instance, printed "A Ballad: Compos'd by Miss Nelly Pentweazle" ["The Distress'd Damsel"], which, the author informed his readership, was "borrow'd from the STUDENT . . . consisting of Original Pieces only, and published with the Approbation and Assistance of those famous Universities" [Oxford and Cambridge].[46] And Mary Midnight, in turn, made an appearance in the second volume of The Student, submitting an epigram entitled "The Miser and the Mouse", which was printed in the course of the accompanying article.[47]

In contrast to The Midwife, however, The Student had a more outwardly pedagogic design: namely, "to promote learning in general" and so to "comprehend all the branches of polite Literature".[48] The second volume is prefaced with a pleasing essay headed "On Gratitude", almost certainly written by Smart, and which anticipates his exaltation of this

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46 The Midwife, I No.1, 36; The Student, I No.8, 310.

47 The Student, II No.7, 269-70 (p.270). "The Miser and the Mouse" also appeared in The Midwife, II No.1, 38.

48 "To the Reader", The Student, I No.1, p.iii.

quality in all his religious verse. Gratitude, he wrote, "is incomparably the most amiable of all the virtues", and serves as "an ornament to angels, being herself one of the highest of them".[49] And his lyric "A Morning-Piece", which is printed in an earlier number, associated "Gratitude" with specifically Christian worship:

> The abbey bells in wak'ning rounds
> The warning peal have giv'n;
> And pious Gratitude resounds
> Her morning hymn to heav'n. [50]

The Student also printed various poems either celebrating, or alluding to, music, such as "The World a Fiddle and a Dance"; and Orpheus's power of controlling nature was referred to on at least three separate occasions.[51]

But The Student also provided ample opportunity for displays of levity and wit on the part of its contributors. In Smart's case this response could take the form of a pithy jeu d'esprit:

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49 "On Gratitude", in The Student, II, 1-3 (p.1). Compare On the Omniscience of the Supreme Being (Cambridge, 1752): "And thou cherubic Gratitude, whose voice/To pious ears sounds silverly so sweet (ll. 184-85). See also pp. 420-22 following.

50 The Student, I No.7, 274-75 (p. 275). Compare Jubilate Agno, B2.306: "For the sin against the HOLY GHOST is INGRATITUDE"; Smart also refers to the "angel GRATITUDE" at B2.324.

51 Note "The Royal Psalmist's harp and tongue/Melodious hymns divinely sung": "The World a Fiddle and a Dance", in I No.7, 269-71 (p.271). On Orpheus, see I No.1, 29; I No.6, 239; I No.9, 351.

> FRIGIDIO's muse, from ardour free,
> Whene'er he tunes his lyre,
> Gives him a leaden policy
> T'insure his works from ire.[52]

Or, in a reminder of his continuing connections with Vauxhall, the second volume printed "The Trial of Chaucer's Ghost. Sung at Vaux-Hall immediately after the Recantation; by Mr. Lowe, Miss Norris, and Miss Stephenson. By the Author of the Recantation".[53] A more ambitious undertaking, however, was a collection of essays organized under the general caption, "A new SYSTEM of CASTLE-BUILDING", and signed Chimaericus Cantabrigiensis. An introduction to the series was published in the number for 30 June 1750, and the first four chapters followed in successive issues over the remainder of the year.[54] The seventh chapter in the second volume included an account of one Mr. All-Spice, the universal scholar, whom Smart portrayed as a young Cambridge Commoner, and who is possibly modelled on one of the poet's actual acquaintances. Mr. All-Spice's most notable accomplishment was his skill in practical music-making:

> He play'd upon seven musical instruments, and the seven gentlemen that assisted him swore he play'd upon each better than any other man in the world — and they swore, like honest men, for they were handsomely paid for their trouble — yet maugre all this marvellous skill, he never cou'd be induced to play upon any one before his most intimate acquaintance — "Nothwithstanding

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52 "Epigram extempore on a Cold Poet", in I No.9, 357.

53 Vol. II No.2, 70-72; "The Trial" is not printed in Callan's edition of Smart (1949). I have not been able to trace any music, although a setting was certainly in sometime existence; the text is included in The Muses Delight. An Accurate Collection of English and Italian Songs, Cantatas and Duetts (London, 1754), in a section entitled A Choice Collection of Favourite Songs, Without the Music (pp. 257-323), as "Song 18" (p.260).

54 Vol. I No.6, 223-24; No.7, 249-50; No.8, 284-86; No.9, 331-33; Supplement, 379-81.

> (wou'd he say) I stop perfectly in tune, and have perhaps some little taste and judgment, yet I fall so far short of my own ideas of musick, ev'n in my luckiest hits — that were I to perform before any of you I should be in exquisite pain — and that I am sure none of you desire, nay I cou'd not bear my own company with a fiddle in my hand, were it not for the benefit, I receive from the exercise". This sufficed — and after every man . . . had . . . eat . . . they took their leave muttering, as they went down stairs — vast fellow! — singular modesty! surprizing genious! and so they went home to their colleges. — [55]

"The Female Student", generally reckoned a pseudonym for Smart, also contributed an essay to The Student entitled "On Academical Gallantry". The subject of the writer's observations was "the best fiddle in the whole University. This indeed was his darling passion: nature seem'd to have form'd him for the gratification of this one sense only: he was the soul of our musick-meetings, and the glory of our organists, choristers, crotchet-mongers, and catgut-retailers . . . ". Further characters were introduced during the continuation of this narrative in a later number: Mr. Tunbelly, who "tho' he had neither voice nor ear, yet pretended to a most exquisite taste for music", and Mr. Brevier, who "has lately commenc'd midwife, and is now dwindled into a mere old woman".[56] The strong likelihood of self-mockery through the persona of "Mr.

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[55] Vol. II No.3, 83-83.

[56] The Student, II No.3, 104-110 (pp. 105-6); No.6, 224-28.

Brevier", only strengthens the case for attributing the piece to Smart.

Finally, as remarked upon earlier, the co-existence of The Midwife and The Student gave Smart a twofold opportunity of puffing his favoured productions. A notice in The Inspector concerning "the entertainment of queen Mab" [Burney], directed the readers' attention to "the facetious and ingenious Mrs. Midnight, who has given a most diverting narrative thereof in the fourth number of her magazine". Nor did Smart neglect his own concerns. A footnote to "The Distress'd Damsel" described the "authoress" as "Only daughter to Ebenezer Pentweazle of Truro in the County of Cornwall, Esq; who lately obliged the publick with that excellent work, The Horatian Canons of Friendship".[57]

At the same time as Smart was engrossed in these multifarious literary commissions, his reputation as a librettist was being consolidated by continued performances of his works at the pleasure gardens. In addition to those songs already discussed, at least two others appeared in the early part of the decade, one of which achieved no fewer than five separate printings. It is perplexing that given the obvious popularity of "Sweet William", there should be no indication as to the composer's identity on any of the scores.

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57 The Inspector, No.1, p.7; The Student, I No.8, 310n.

"Sweet William. A Ballad, by Mr. Smart" was first published in The Student of 30 July 1750. It was probably set and performed during this same summer season, for the next edition which followed only three months later, introduced the lyric as "Sweet William A New Song. Sung by Miss Stevenson at Vaux-hall. Within Compass of the German Flute".[58] The song evidently attained sufficient celebrity during its first four years of existence, to warrant admission to an anthology of miscellaneous songs and cantatas, where it appeared under the title: "Sweet William. Sung by Miss Stevenson, at Vauxhall. Set for the German-Flute".[59] A third reproduction further enhanced the song's general distinction; its inclusion in A Collection of Celebrated Songs. Compos'd By The most Eminent Masters also raises the possibility of its having been composed by either Boyce or Arne.[60] The other two copies are single sheet folios, which bear conjectural datings of 1755? and 1760? respectively.[61]

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58 The Student, I No.7, 273; "Sweet William A New Song", The Universal Magazine of Knowledge and Pleasure, VII (October 1750), 183. See Illus. XIV.

59 The Muses Delight, p.129. See Illus. XV.

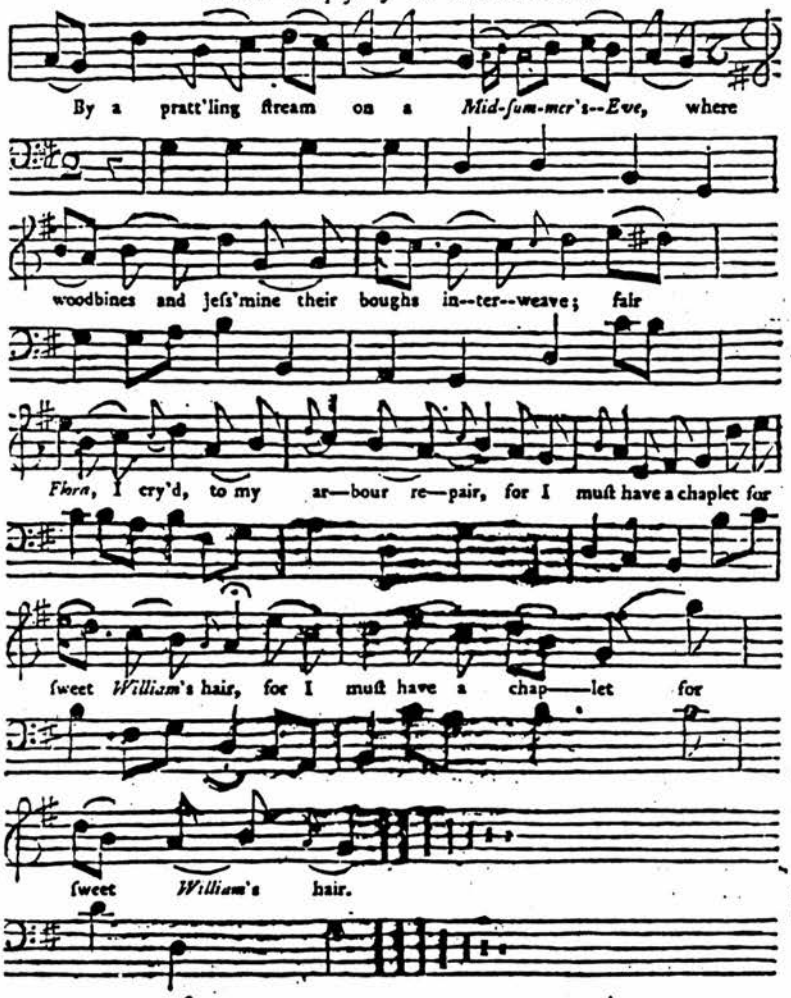
60 Chloe, or the Musical Magazine, A Collection of Celebrated Songs. Compos'd By The most Eminent Masters (London, [1760?]), p.35. See Illus. XVI.

61 "Sweet William. Sung by Miss Stevenson at Vaux Hall" ([London, 1755?]); "Sweet William. Sung by Miss Stevenson at Vauxhall" ([London, 1760?]). See Illus. XVIIa, b. The text of "Sweet William" was also published as "Song XVI" in The Muses Holiday: Or, the Polite Songster. Being An Elegant Collection of . . . New Songs (London, [1757]), pp. 38-39; composer not given.

Sweet *WILLIAM. A New* SONG.

Sung by Miſs STEVENSON *at* Vaux-hall.

Within Compaſs of the German *Flute.*



2.

She brought me the vi'let that grows on the hill,
The vale-dwelling lilly, and gilded jonquil;
But ſuch languid odours how could I approve,
Juſt warm from the lips of the lad thae I love?

3.

She brought me his faith and his truth to diſplay,
The undying myrtle, and ever-green bay;
But why theſe to me, who've his conſtancy known?
And *Billy* has laurels enough of his own.

4.

The next was a gift that I could not contemn,
For ſhe brought me two roſes that grew on a ſtem;
Of the dear nuptial tye they ſtood emblems conſeſt,
So I kiſs'd them, and preſs'd them quite cloſe to my breaſt.

5.

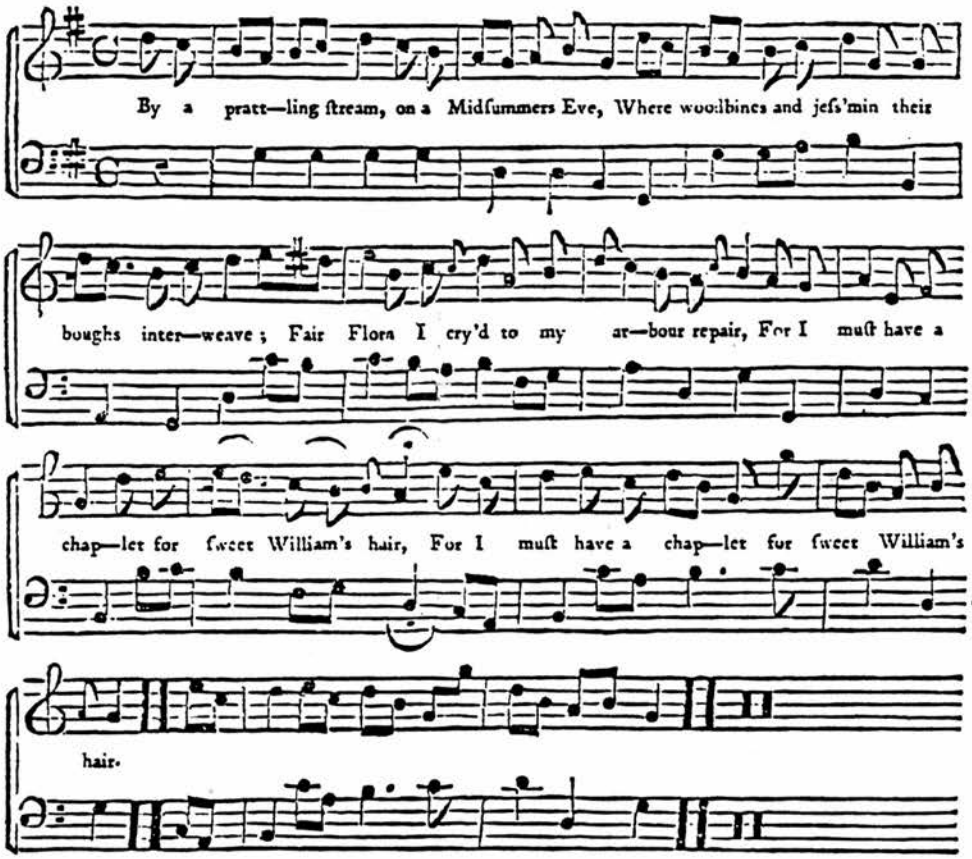
She brought me a ſun-flow'r—This, fair one's your due,
For it once was a maiden, and love-ſick, like you,
O give it me quick, to my ſhepherd I'll run.
As true to his flame, as this flow'r to her ſun.

Illus. XIV. Anon., "Sweet William", The Universal Magazine of Knowledge and Pleasure, VII (October 1750), 183.

My heart was like a lump of ice,
Till warm'd by your bright eye;
But then it kindled in a trice
A flame that ne'er can die.
Then take me, try me, and you ſhall find,
That I've a heart that's true;
For of all the girls I ever ſaw,
I ne'er lov'd one like you.

Sweet WILLIAM. *Sung by Miſs* STEVENSON, *at* Vauxhall.

Set for the German-Flute.



2.

She brought me the vi'let, that grows on the hill,
The vale-dwelling lilly and gilded jonquil;
But ſuch languid odours how could I approve,
Juſt warm from the lips of the lad that I love.
Juſt warm, &c.

3.

She brought me his faith and his truth to diſplay,
The undying myrtle and ever-green bay;
But why theſe to me, who've his conſtancy known,
And Billy has lawrels enough of his own.
And Billy, &c.

4.

The next was a gift that I could not contemn,
For ſhe brought me two roſes that grew on a ſtem;
Of the dear nuptial tie they ſtood emblems conteſt,
So I kiſs'd them and preſs'd them quite cloſe to my breaſt.
So I kiſs'd, &c.

5.

She brought me a ſun-flow'r—this fair one's your due,
For it once was a maiden and love-ſick like you;
O give it me quick, to my ſhepherd I'll run,
As true to his flame as this flow'r to her ſun.
As true, &c.

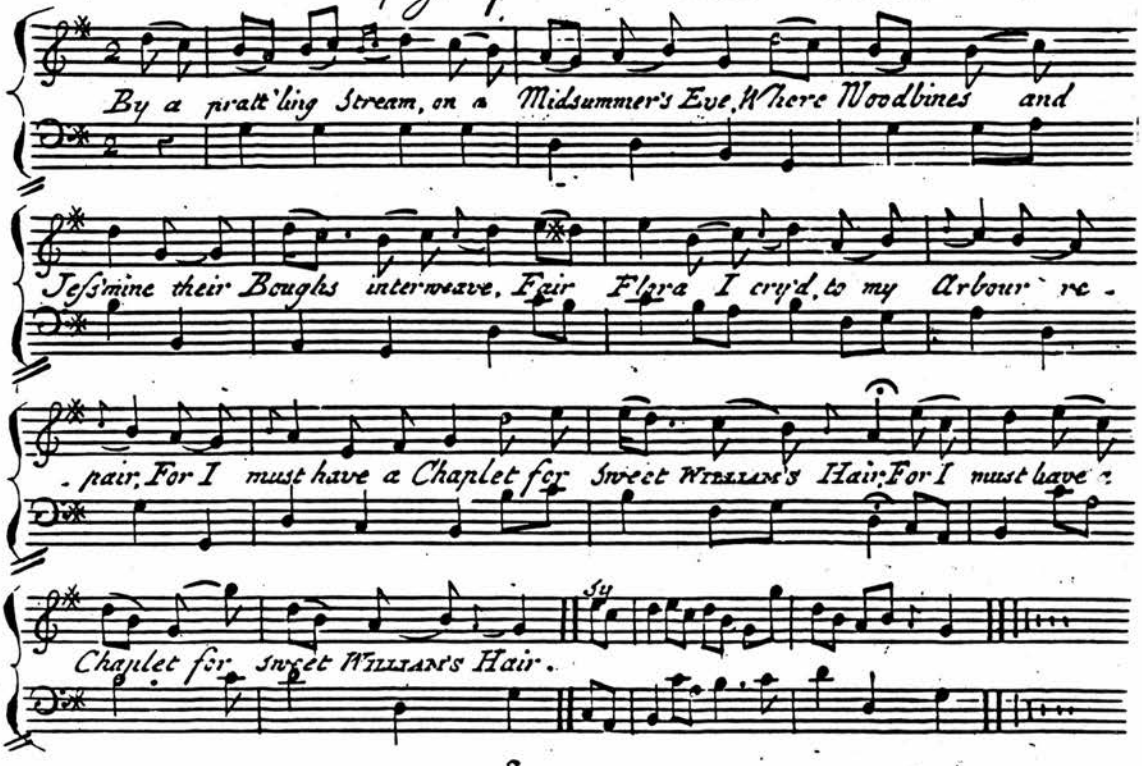
Bumpers,

Illus. XV. Anon., "Sweet William", in The Muses Delight (1754), p.129.

SWEET WILLIAM.

SUNG by MISS STEVENSON, at VAUX-HALL.

Within Compass of the GERMAN FLUTE.



2

She brought me the Vi'let that grows on the Hill,
The vale dwelling Lilly and gilded Jonquil,
But such languid Odours how could I approve:
Just warm from the Lips of the Lad that I love.

3

She brought me his FAITH and his TRUTH to display,
The undying Myrtle, and ever-green Bay;
But why these to me, who've his Constancy known,
And BILLY has Lawrels enough of his own.

4

The next was a Gift that I could not contemn,
For she brought me two Roses that grew on a Stem:
Of the dear nuptial Tye, they stood Emblems confest,
So I kiss'd them, and prest'd them quite close to my Breast.

5

She brought me a Sun-flow'r - This, Fair one's your due
For it once was a MAIDEN, and Love sick, like you.
O give it me quick, to my SHEPHERD I'll run.
As true to his Flame, as this Flow'r to her Sun.

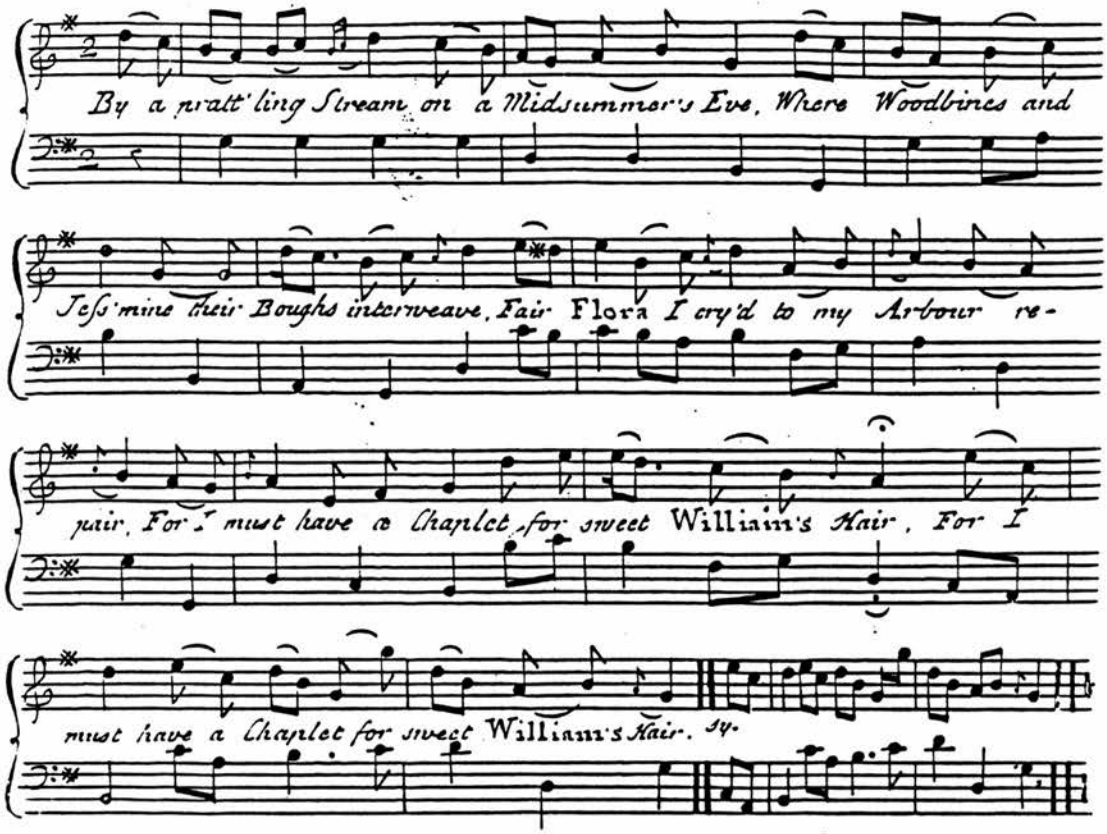
Illus. XVI. Anon., "Sweet William", in Chloe [1760?], p.35 [reduced].

351

Sweet William.

Sung by Miss Stevenson at Vaux Hall.

Within Compass of the German Flute.



2

She brought me the Vilet that grows on the Hill,
The vale dwelling Lilly and gilded Jonquil,
But such languid Odours how could I approve;
Just warm from the Lips of the Lad that I love.

3

She brought me his Faith and his Truth to display,
The undying Myrtle, and ever-green Bay;
But why these to me, whove his Constancy known,
And Billy has Laurels enough of his own.

4

The next was a Gift that I could not contemn,
For she brought me two Roses that grew on a Stem;
Of the dear nuptial Tye they stood Emblems confest,
So I kiss'd them and press'd them quite close to my Breast.

5

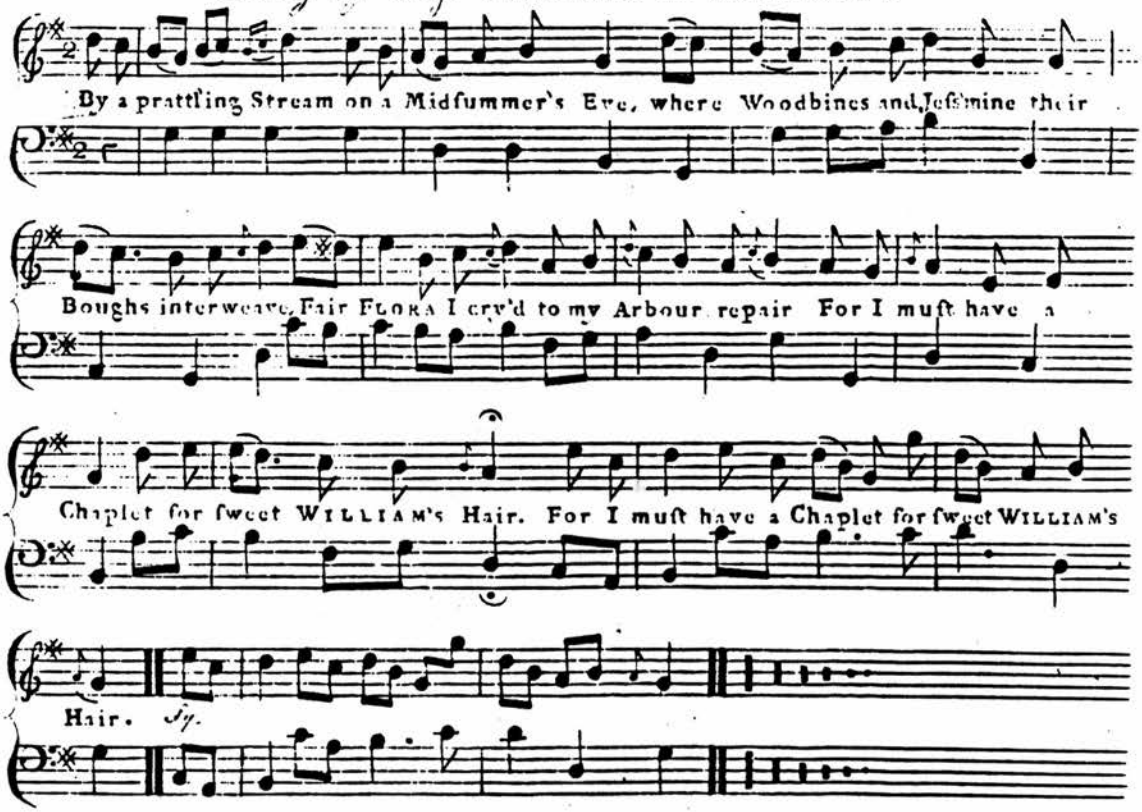
She brought me a Sun-flow'r—This, Fair one's your due,
For it once was a Maiden, and Love sick, like you,
O give it me quick, to my Shepherd I'll run,
As true to his Flame as this Flow'r to her Sun.

Illus. XVIIa. Anon., "Sweet William" [1755?], s.sh.fol. [reduced]. B.L. G305(351).

304

Sweet WILLIAM.

Sung by Miſs Stevenson at Vauxhall.



2

She brought me the Vi'let that grows on the Hill,
The Vale dwelling Lilly and gilded Junquil;
But ſuch languid Odours how could I approve
Juſt warm from the Lips of the Lad that I Love.

3

She brought me (his Faith and his Truth to diſplay)
The undying Myrtle and ever green Bay;
But why theſe to me who've his Conſtancy known,
And BILLY has Laurels enough of his own.

4

The next was a Gift that I could not contemn,
For ſhe brought me two Roſes that grew on a ſtem;
Of the dear Nuptial Tye they ſtood Emblems confeſt,
So I kiſs'd them and preſs'd them quite cloſe to my Breaſt

5

She brought me a Sun-Flow'r—This Fair one's your due.
For it once was a Maiden, and Loveſick, like you:
O give it me quick to my Shepherd I'll run,
As true to his Flame as this Flow'r to her SUN.

Illus. XVIIb. Anon., "Sweet William" [1760?], s.sh.fol. [reduced]. B.L. G.306(245).

Given the ten-year span of these five impressions, it is remarkable that there should be so little variation among them. Indeed, apart from the insertion of brackets in line ten of the [1760?] folio copy, all textual variants represent no more than minor accidentals of punctuation and typography. The music also displays a notable exactitude in all instances; the Universal Magazine printing seems the most hastily prepared, for the opening melody line is inverted, and the closing "symphonie" omitted.

The setting itself displays many of the features already remarked upon in the songs of Boyce and Arne: use of predominantly tonic and dominant harmonies; a simple tonal scheme — indeed, the only fleeting modulation in bars four and five is expressive rather than formal; the dominant pausa and reiteration of the final line of verse in a higher register; and the graceful lyricism of the melody, so engaging in performance. Pervasive use of grace notes is a prominent feature, and the accented passing note on the final vocal cadence, in itself unusual, accords with the overall melodic conception. The awkward bass leap of a 9th on beats one and two of bar nine — and correspondingly, in the "symphonie" — would doubtless have been bridged in performance by repeating the low "b" at an octave's higher displacement ().

The second air appeared in The Gentleman's Magazine for 1754 under the simple heading of "A Song, Set to Music".[62]

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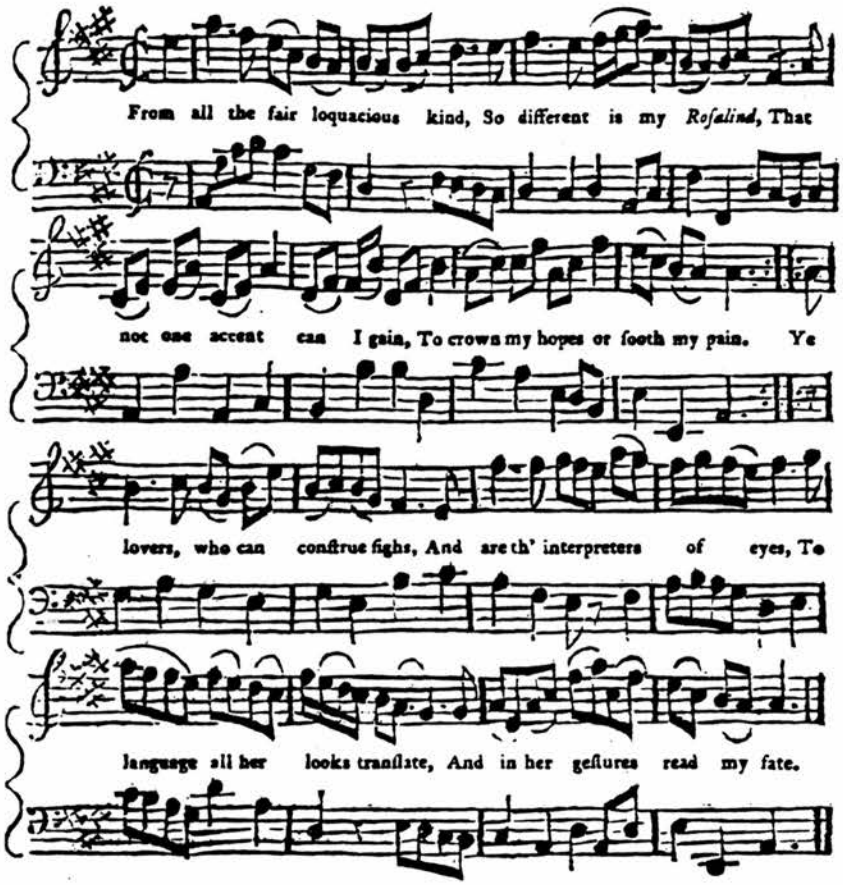
62 Vol. XXIV (November 1754), 523. See Illus. XVIII.

A SONG, *Set to* MUSIC. 523



And if in them you chance to find,
Ought that's gentle, ought that's kind,
Adieu mean hopes of being great,
And all the littleneſs of ſtate.

All thoughts of grandeur I'll deſpiſe.
That from dependance take their riſe,
To ſerve her ſhall be my employ;
And love's ſweet agony my joy.

An ODE *to* HEALTH, *occaſioned by a young Lady's Indiſpoſition in* Bath.

PArent of all our bliſs below,
Goddeſs of blooming health, beſtow
Thy Influence divine
On one, who every virtue loves,
On one, whom every heart approves,
To none more dear than mine.

Whether thro' theſe warm ſtreams you chooſe
Your balmy bounties to diffuſe,
And bid them health impart;
Or if on *Lanſdown*'s heights you pleaſe
To waft it in a gentle breeze;
O! may it reach her heart.

Long has ſhe ſhewn an even mind,
A ſoul in ſickneſs quite reſign'd,
And free from earthly ſtains;
Supported by religion's aid,
She bears affliction undiſmay'd,
And firmly feels it pains.

She ſcarce has finiſh'd half her time,
Her youth and beauty in their prime;
O! wou'd you ſpare her life
She yet might every ſtate adorn,
Nor all thoſe fond endearments ſcorn
Of mother, friend, and wife.

Propitious then incline to ſave
Such rare perfections from the grave;
From her, you will receive
The tribute of a thankful heart,
From me, what fondneſs can impart,
What gratitude can give.

Illus. XVIII. Anon., "A Song, Set to Music", The Gentleman's Magazine, XXIV (November 1754), 523.

This "Song" is a setting of Smart's poem "The Silent Fair", which was first published with its companion-piece "The Talkative Fair", in the third volume of Dodsley's Museum.[63] It was subsequently reprinted in the second volume of The Midwife (1751), and as "Ballad V" in his Poems on Several Occasions (1752).[64] Some textual inconsistencies differentiate these four editions, as "aught can find" (Dodsley)/ "chance to find" (Gentleman's); "From all the fair" (Gentleman's)/ "From all her fair" (P.O.S.O.); and "That from dependance" (Gentleman's)/"Which from dependence" (P.O.S.O.). The transcription as it appears in The Gentleman's Magazine, however, is most noteworthy for its musical oddities. Some obvious errors may be attributed to carelessness on the part of transcriber or compositor: the first note on "From" should be a quaver and not a crotchet; the second beat of bar six (on the word "I") should comprise two quavers and not semiquavers; and there is an extra quaver in the melody of bar eleven ("are th'interpreters"). But the music itself is decidedly bizarre.

The vocal range is enormous, from middle "c" (♯) to "a'" (as printed, though sounded, of course, an octave lower). A top "a" falls within the tenor reach, though five repetitions in a short strophic air would make considerable demands on the

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63 R.[obert] Dodsley, comp., The Museum: Or, the Literary and Historical Register, 3 vols. (London, 1746-47), III No. XXXIX (12 September 1747), 493-94.

64 The Midwife, II No.4, 168; Poems on Several Occasions (London, 1752), pp. 202-3.

singer. Bars five and six, however, are placed too low in the register to be vocally effective. The melody line is well contoured for the first eight bars, but disintegrates on the words "And are th'interpreters of eyes"; the penultimate bar is instrumentally, and not vocally, conceived. The bass accompaniment is no less anomalous, displaying erratic leaps (as under the words "To crown"), indeterminate harmonies (as on the cadence at "Rosalind"), unstylistic use of rests (at bars eleven and fourteen), and no apparent unity of figuration or arrangement. One feasible explanation for these irregularities is that "The Silent Fair" was hastily drafted from an actual performance, and the score, therefore, does not accurately reproduce what was sung and played. It is equally possible, however, that the setting was ill-conceived, and submitted for publication without the benefit of revision or further reflection.

The third song to be considered, again, plainly headed "Sung by Mr. Beard at Ranelagh" [c.1760], is the only Smart lyric to bear the explicit designation of "Ranelagh" in its title. The gardens at Ranelagh were Georgian in creation, and were opened for musical diversion in 1742, in direct competition to Vauxhall.[65] Ranelagh was conceived chiefly for evening amusements, and fulfilled this design for over forty years. Initially the musical entertainments consisted almost solely of oratorio excerpts, but the performances

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65 See Abraham Rees, The Cyclopaedia, 39 vols. (London, 1819), XXIX, sigs. $3F^{v}$ - $3F2^{r}$, s.v. Ranelagh. Ranelagh also boasted a fine orchestra, and an organ was installed in 1746.

eventually assumed the character of a masquerade, embracing dances and promenades, as well as the usual vocal and instrumental medleys.[66] This recreational atmosphere undoubtedly encouraged capricious or indecorous behaviour on the part of the clientèle, as an article in The Student entitled "The School of Impudence: Or, an Adventure at Ranelagh Gardens" made abundantly clear.[67] As with Vauxhall, so too Ranelagh, witnessed the publication of dozens of ballads, cantatas and duets as executed during the season, which appeared either singly,[68] or in miscellaneous collections.[69] It is to Ranelagh's performing tradition that this final song unquestionably belongs.

There are two unusual circumstances to remark upon at the outset. Firstly, stanzas two to six belong to a much earlier period in Smart's poetical career, for as "The Distress'd Maid" they were set by Arne in or around 1747. As already remarked, the text appeared in both The Midwife and The Student a few years later, as "A Ballad: Compos'd by

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66 See T. Lea Southgate, "Music at the Public Pleasure Gardens of the Eighteenth Century", in Proceedings of the Musical Association, 38th Session 1911-1912 (London, 1912), 141-59.

67 The Student, I No.4, 140.

68 Many solo songs were published in The Gentleman's Magazine. See, for example, "The Masquerade Song. Sung by Mr Beard, at Ranelagh", in XIX (August 1749), 371; "A Song from Mr Hughes's Poems; Sung at Ranelagh", in XXI (September 1751), 419; "The Diffident Lover. Sung by Mr Lowe", in XIX (November 1749), 518; "The Highland Laddie . . . now sung at Ranelagh and all the other Gardens", in XX (July 1750), 325.

69 As The Ranelaugh Concert, Being A Choice Collection of the Newest Songs Sung At All the Public Places of Entertainment (London, [1775?]); or, The Pretty Maidens Amusement. Being A Choice Collection of . . . Songs, sung at ... Renelagh, Marybone, Sadlers-Wells, &c. (London, [1765?]).

Miss Nelly Pentweazle" and "The Distress'd Damsel. A Ballad", respectively.[70] The [1760?] settings, however, append introductory and concluding stanzas — neither, apparently, the work of Smart — and which relocate the song within the pastoral tradition. In 1759 and 1760 the poet was in practically continuous confinement, as internal dating from Jubilate Agno reveals; it is unlikely that the accretions were wrought with his knowledge or authority. Secondly, it is surprising to find this lyric being taken up again at such a lengthy remove from his other pieces, the majority of which were first aired between 1745 and 1751. It is possible that the song represented a gesture of goodwill from one or other of the composers associated with Smart, at a time when his personal circumstances were far from propitious.

There are three different copies of the setting, one of which may be dated exactly. As "A New Song", the piece was printed in The London Magazine for July 1760, and was probably sung during this same summer season. Two single sheet folios followed soon after, now with the addition of instrumental ritornellos, but reproducing a text and music practically identical to those of the London transcript.[71] The textual variants are of minor significance: "wood's" (London)/ "Woods" [1760? (I)]/"Wood" [1760? (II)] (st.1); "with right" (London)/ "both with right"[1760? (I and II)] (st.4); "or by Law,"

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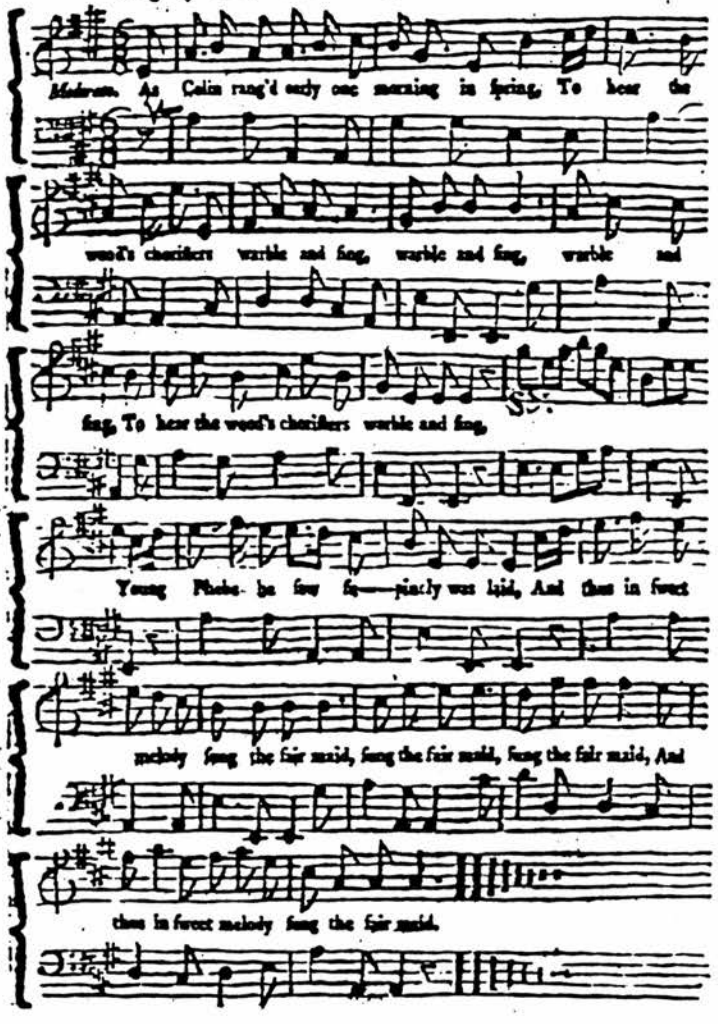
70 See n.46; also printed as "The Distressed Damsel. Ballad VII", in Poems on Several Occasions (1752), pp. 205-6.

71 "A New Song", The London Magazine, XXIX (July 1760), 372; "Sung by Mr. Beard" ([London, 1760?]), s.sh.fol.; "Sung by Mr Beard" ([London, 1760?]), s.sh.fol. See Illus. XIX a, b, c.

372 A NEW SONG,

Sung by Mr. BEARD, at RANELAGH.



2.

Of all my experience how vain is th' amount,
Since fifteen long winters I fairly can count!
Was ever poor damsel so sadly betray'd,
To live to these years,—and still be a maid!

3.

Ye heroes, triumphant by land and by sea!
Sworn votaries to Love—not unmindful of me!
Of prowess approv'd, of no dangers afraid,
Will you hand by, like statues, and see me a [maid?

4.

Ye counsellors sage! who with eloquent tongue
Can do what you please, with right and with wrong,
Can it be, on by law, or by equity, said,
That a comely young girl ought to die an old maid?

5.

Ye learned physicians, whose excellent skill
Can save or demolish, can heal or can kill!
To a poor forlorn damsel contribute your aid,
Who is sick, very sick! of remaining a maid.

6.

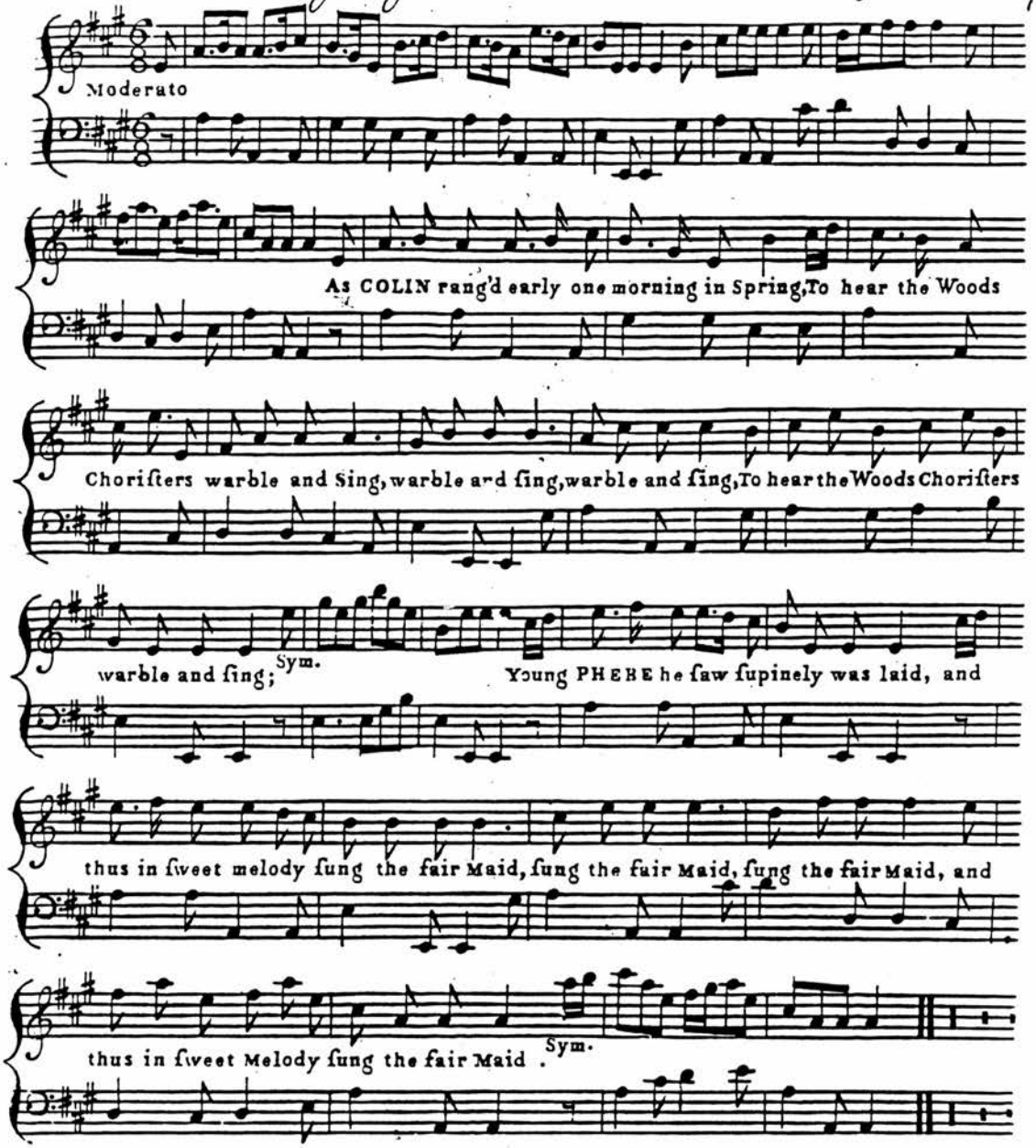
You fops I invoke not to list to my song,
Who answer no end, and to no sex belong;
Ye echoes of echoes, and shadows of shade!
For, if I had you,—I might still be a maid!

7.

Poor Colin was incited to hear her complain,
Then whisper'd relief, like a kind-hearted
fairy;
And Phebe, well pleas'd, is no longer afraid
Of being neglected, and dying a maid.

Illus. XIXa. Anon., "A New Song", The London Magazine, XXIX (July 1760), 372.

Sung by Mr. BEARD at Ranelagh.



2

Of all my experience how vaſt the amount,
Since fifteen long Winters I fairly can count;
Was ever poor Damſel ſo ſadly betray'd,
To live to theſe Years, and yet ſtill be a Maid.

3

Ye Heroes triumphant by Land and by Sea,
Sworn Vot'ries to Love, yet unmindfull of me;
Of proweſs approv'd, of no dangers afraid,
Will ye ſtand by like Daſtards, and ſe me a Maid.

4

Ye Counſellors Sage, who with eloquent Tongue,
Can do what you pleaſe, both th right and th wrong;
Can it be, or by Law, or by Equity ſaid,
That comely young Girl, ought to die an old Maid.

5

Ye learned Phyſicians whoſe excellent ſkill,
Can ſave, or demoliſh, can heal, or can kill;
To a poor forlorn Damſel, contribute your aid,
Who is ſick, very ſick, of remaining a Maid.

6

Ye Fops I invoke not to liſt to my Song,
Who anſwer no end, and to no Sex belong;
Ye eccho's of eccho and ſhadows of ſhade,
For if I had you, I might ſtill be a Maid.

7

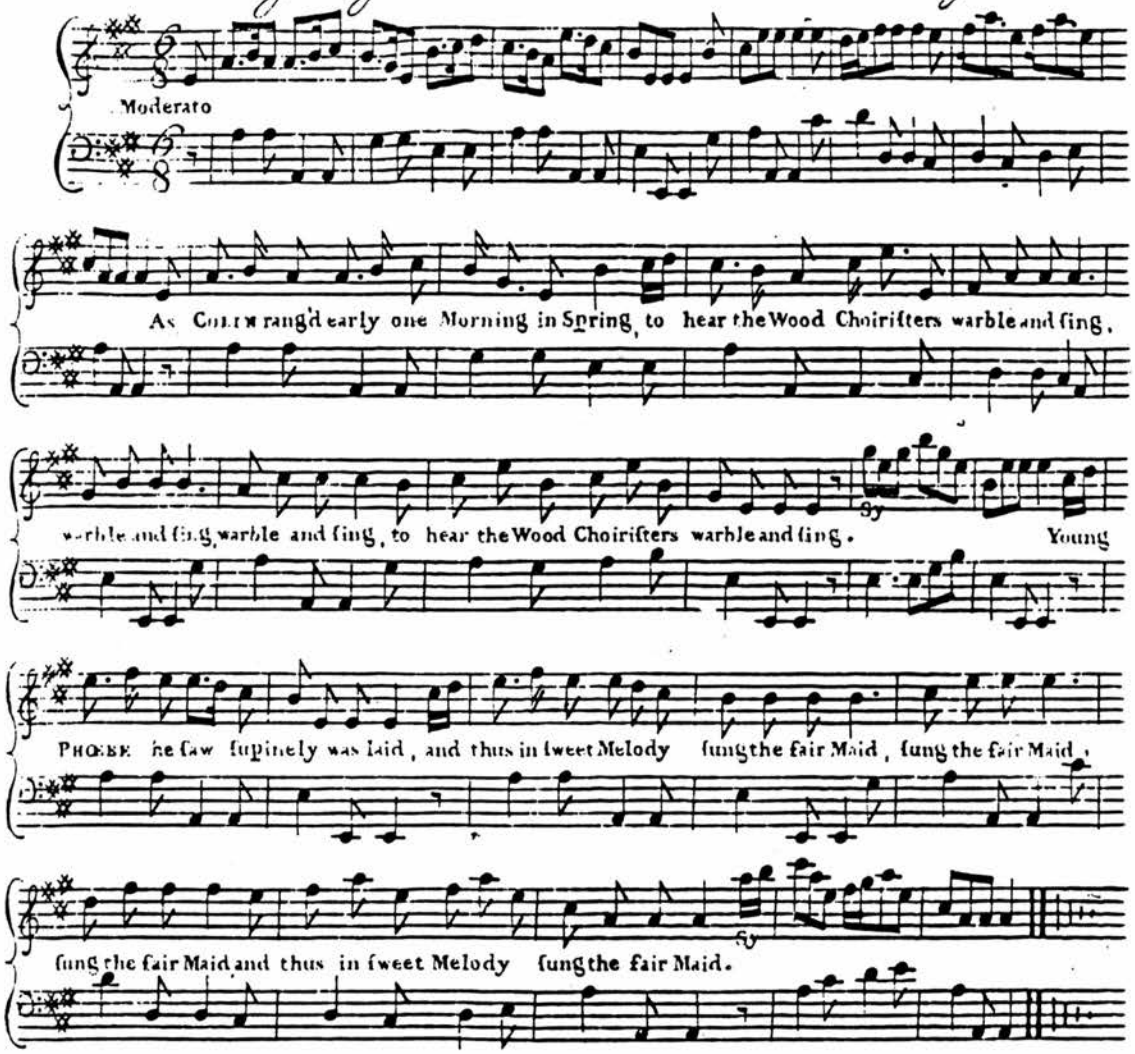
Poor COLIN was melted to hear her complain,
Then whiſper'd relief like a kind-hearted Swain;
And PHEBE well pleaſ'd, is no longer afraid,
Of being neleg'ted, and dying a Maid.

Illus. XIXb. Anon., s.sh.fol. [reduced].

"Sung by Mr. Beard", [1760?], B.L. G.316. d(4).

69

Sung by Mr. Beard at Ranelagh



(2)

Of all my experience how vaſt the amount,
Since fifteen long Winters I fairly can count;
Was ever poor Damſel ſo ſadly betray'd,
To live to theſe years and yet ſtill be a Maid.

(3)

Ye nymphs triumphant by Land and by Sea,
Sworn Votaries to Love yet unmindfull of me;
Of Prowels approv'd of no dangers afraid,
Will you ſtand by like Daſtards and ſee me a Maid.

(4)

Ye Counſellers ſage who with eloquent Tongue,
Can do what you pleaſe both with right & with wrong;
Can it be by Law or by Equity ſaid,
That a comely young Girl ought to die an Old Maid.

(5)

Ye learned Phyſicians whoſe excellent ſkill,
Can ſave or demoliſh, can heal or can kill;
To a poor forlorn Damſel contribute your aid,
Who is ſick very ſick of remaining a Maid.

(6)

Ye Fops I invoke not to liſt to my Song,
Who anſwer no end, and to no ſex belong;
Ye eccho of eccho's and ſhadow's of ſhade,
For if I had you I might ſtill be a Maid.

(7)

Poor Colin was melted to hear her complain,
Then whiſper'd relief like a kind hearted Swain;
And Phœbe well pleaſ'd is no longer afraid,
Of being neglected and dying a Maid.

Illus. XIXc. Anon., "Sung by Mr Beard", [1760?], s.sh.fol. [reduced]. B.L. G.306(64).

(London; [1760? (I)])/"by Law" [1760? (II)] (st.4); "echoes of echoes," (London)/ "eccho's of eccho" [1760? (I)]/"eccho of eccho's" [1760? (II)] (st.6). The music, too, differs only in detail:  (London; [1760? (II)])/  [1760? (I)]; and an added upbeat at the intermediate ritornello in [1760? (I)].

Expressive use of the "Scotch snap" () is a feature of this anonymous setting, as is the  rhythmic and melodic motif, which is used to good effect in passages of rising sequential imitation (at "warble and sing" and "sung the fair Maid"). The only implied modulation is at the half close, from tonic to dominant major; the expected sharpened leading note is absent both from melody and bass, and from the succeeding ritornello. The melody is finely contoured and well structured; and contrasts in tone and attitude on the singer's part would be facilitated by the itemized catalogues of the maid's complaint. It is reasonable to conclude, from the circumstance of three printings in one year alone, that ["The Distress'd Damsel"] proved a popular item in the Ranelagh repertoire, especially as rendered by one of London's most acclaimed tenor voices.[72]

In the midst of these periodical engagements, Grub Street skirmishes and theatrical and musical commissions that consumed a great deal of Smart's energies from 1750 to 1752, he was also working steadily towards his first major

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72 Beard, it might be noted, subscribed to Smart's Translation of the Psalms (1765).

literary project: namely, a collected edition of his early poetical works. The handsome quarto, complete with engravings, which formed the outcome of his labours, was published by Newbery in June 1752.[73] Apart from the obvious interest of its verse contents, the impressive ten-page roll-call of subscribers which prefaces the volume, also reveals something of the nature and range of Smart's connections at this time. A number of musical figures appearing in the list — Charles Burney, Boyce, Arne, Collet, Tyers — have been discussed in the course of this work; but there are artists of comparable renown whose relationship to Smart has not, to date, been the subject of any investigation. Two names of special prominence in the line of singer-actresses, are those of Mrs. Cibber and Mrs. Clive.

Susanna Maria Cibber (1714-1766) was, as already stated, the sister of Thomas Arne and an associate of both Burney and Garrick. Her singing career, which began in 1732, brought her immediate recognition in the related fields of masque, oratorio and opera, which she performed in a variety of locations: Lincoln's Inn Fields, Haymarket Theatre and Drury Lane. Although technically restricted, her interpretative powers were highly esteemed by Handel, who wrote the contralto recitatives and arias in Messiah

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73 Poems on Several Occasions. By Christopher Smart, A.M. Fellow of Pembroke-Hall, Cambridge, was announced in The London Magazine, XXI (July 1752), 340, Item 47; also in The Gentleman's Magazine, XXII (June 1752), 291.

expressly for her rendition. Another admirer penned the following tribute, again extolling her ability to convey a multiplicity of emotions:

> Now tuneful as Apollo's lyre,
> She stands amid the vocal choir;
> If solemn measures slowly move,
> Or Lydian airs invite to love,
> Her looks inform the trembling strings,
> And raise each passion, that she sings;
> The wanton Graces hover round,
> Perch on her lips, and tune the sound.[74]

Mrs. Cibber was equally celebrated as a dramatic actress; indeed, she discovered in both comic and serious roles her true métier. Following her debut in 1736, she went on to perform virtually every tragic female part in the English canon. She maintained this twofold career to the end of her life, bringing to stage and concert chamber a natural pathos and intense feeling for text, that impressed all who heard her. She was contracted to Covent Garden in 1742, but returned to sing at the King's Theatre Haymarket, and to act at Drury Lane in the 1744/45 season. She was re-engaged by John Rich at Covent Garden during the years 1750 to 1753, but eventually rejoined Garrick when he bought out the patent for Drury Lane. Here she remained, notwithstanding a prolonged clash with Garrick over contractual and business obligations, which was apparently resolved by the 1760s. Their re-established artistic and personal rapport lasted up until her death from a chronic illness in 1766.

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[74] "To Mrs Cibber, on her Acting at Dublin", The Gentleman's Magazine, XII (March 1742), 158.

Given the scope of Mrs. Cibber's activities and contacts, it is difficult to imagine she and Smart not meeting through one agency or another. In all probability they were introduced by Burney in the mid-1740s. Smart mentioned Mrs. Cibber in The Midwife of 1751, and over a decade later her name recurred in a satirical essay on acting.[75] This latter circumstance raises the question of Smart's possible involvement in a series of medley concerts, which were staged during the 1757/58 season by Theophilus Cibber [husband to Susanna] and his company in the Little Theatre in the Haymarket. Various pseudonymous performers associated with Smart's earlier Mother Midnight ventures re-appeared in these productions, but it is inconceivable that Smart himself took any active part in the proceedings. By this date his confinement was a matter of public knowledge; whether he received any financial benefit from Cibber's entertainments (which totalled forty-four in number), is doubtful.[76]

Kitty Clive (1711-1785) was the most popular comic singer and actress of her day. She began her career at Drury Lane at the age of seventeen, and from here progressed rapidly through the media of opera, pantomime and masque, to find particular empathy with the part of Polly in Gay's Beggar's Opera. As with Mrs. Cibber, so too Mrs. Clive performed in oratorios, and took the role of Delilah in the first performance of

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75 The Midwife, I, No.1, 38; Mrs. Midnight's Orations (1763), pp. 63-64.

76 These performances were inaugurated on 15 June 1757; the last was held on 6 January 1758. See "Appendix B: Smart and Mrs. Midnight on the Stage", in Sherbo, Christopher Smart, pp. 269-72.

Handel's Samson (1741), for which she was acclaimed by the composer himself. Burney, however, while allowing her considerable merit in lighter pieces, had scant regard for her essays in this form: "Her singing, which was intolerable when she meant it to be fine, in ballad farces and songs of humour was, like her comic acting, every thing it should be".[77] Mrs. Clive performed dozens of Arne's ballads, and sang in Boyce's masque The Shepherds' Lottery (1751). She acted at many different venues: at Covent Garden from 1743-45, in Ireland, at Lincoln's Inn Fields, and at Drury Lane from about 1748 onwards. And although they clashed on numerous occasions, she maintained a grudging admiration for Garrick with whom she frequently appeared in the last two decades of her career. Following her retiral from the stage, she spent her remaining years in a cottage on Horace Walpole's Strawberry Hill estate.

The most likely intermediary for an introduction between Smart and Mrs. Clive is Garrick or Boyce, though again, the number of contacts on both sides expands rather than decreases the possibilities. Smart mentioned her abilities in several different publications with which he was involved: The Midwife, The Nut-Cracker and Mrs. Midnight's Orations.[78] And Mrs. Clive appears to have maintained an interest in the poet's fluctuating fortunes, for she is included in the cast of The Guardian, at Garrick's benefit performance of 1759.

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77 History of Music, IV, 654. She was admired by the writer Thomas Cooke, who also subscribed to Smart's Poems.

78 The Midwife, I No.1, 47-48; III No.4, 142; Ferdinando Foot [Christopher Smart], The Nut-Cracker (London, 1751), p.59 ; Mrs. Midnight's Orations, pp. 63-64.

Two names cited in the previous chapter in connection with Arne's and Boyce's Vauxhall songs, were those of the music historian Johann Pepusch, and the singer Thomas Lowe.

Johann Christoph Pepusch (1667-1752), composer, organist, musicologist and teacher, became, in the course of a long life, one of London's most influential musical figures. He wrote over a hundred violin sonatas and other instrumental works, miscellaneous songs and duets, and a large number of verse anthems, services and sacred pieces, many of them penned at the behest of his patron the Duke of Chandos. From about 1720 onwards he turned his attention to dramatic music, and produced a series of secular cantatas — Italianate in form — which were often specifically designed to provide musical interludes in the course of theatrical performances. He contributed to the hugely successful setting of The Beggar's Opera (1728), and collaborated with Theophilus Cibber and the poet John Hughes in a number of masques which were staged at Drury Lane. For over two decades he was also musical director to Lincoln's Inn Theatre, for which playhouse he wrote additional comic and ballad operas. The last twenty years of his life were increasingly devoted to antiquarian interests and to teaching; among his pupils were Boyce, Benjamin Cooke and James Nares, all of whom supplied tunes for the Collection of Melodies that accompanied Smart's Psalms (1765).

Of his musicological predilections, Hawkins noted: "he had . . . such a partiality for musical mysteries, and a spirit

so truly antiquarian, that he allowed no composition to be Music but what was old and obscure".[79] This Casaubon-like ethos was reflected in Pepusch's interest in Greek theory and harmonics, and in his espousal of sixteenth-century musical forms. Appropriately, he co-founded the Academy of Antient Music in 1710, to which institution both Arne and Burney were attached at the time of Burney's London apprenticeship (1744/45). Notwithstanding this somewhat pedantic approach, which is encapsulated in his Treatise on Harmony (1731), Pepusch was, from all accounts, a benevolent figure. Up to the end of his life he continued to be "visited and consulted . . . by young musical students, to whom he was always kind and communicative". Burney also recorded their initial meeting: "About the year 1746, I was so fortunate, at the late Dr. Arne's, as to be introduced to his acquaintance", and detailed further visits "to this venerable master, very early in my life".[80] Undoubtedly Burney was responsible for procuring Pepusch's support, though as the learned octogenarian died in July 1752, it is questionable whether he actually received his copy of Smart's Poems.

Thomas Lowe (d.1783) was the most acclaimed tenor of the age. Following his debut at Drury Lane in September 1740, he quickly progressed by way of ballad operas, operettas and the pleasure gardens repertoire, to a permanent position at Covent Garden by 1748. Here, and later at Drury Lane, he took minor

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79 General History, IV, 638.

80 Burney, History of Music, IV, 636; 636, n.b.; 636, n.z.

roles in Shakespeare productions, mainly as a vehicle for incidental vocal arias. He also sang in Arne's more ambitious stage ventures, and became closely associated with Handelian oratorio. Notwithstanding Handel's high regard for his artistry, Lowe's lack of application appeared to limit his success in weightier undertakings. As Burney remarked, "with the finest tenor voice I ever heard in my life, for want of diligence and cultivation, he never could be safely trusted with any thing better than a ballad, which he constantly learned by his ear".[81]

But at Vauxhall, Marylebone and Ranelagh from about 1745 to 1763, Lowe's reputation was being constantly enhanced. He excelled in the lightly characterized arias and duets that formed the pleasure gardens's staple fare, and many songs were merely printed under his name and that of the particular venue.[82] Lowe held the lease of Marylebone from 1763 to 1768, and under his management its musical activities flourished.[83] In addition to the usual sprightly airs, Lowe also staged operas, plays and musical miscellanies in which he himself took a prominent part. He was closely linked with Arne, who conceived his Shakespeare settings with the tenor in mind; it is highly probable that Lowe performed others of Arne's and Boyce's songs to verses by

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81 Ibid., IV, 667.

82 As, for example, "The Rover. A New Song. Sung by Mr. Lowe at Marybon Gardens", The London Magazine, XX (March 1751), 132; "Delia. Sung by Mr Lowe at Vauxhall", The Gentleman's Magazine, XXVI (September 1756), 443. See also Chapter 2, nn. 8, 9, 14.

83 Marylebone also published many collections of songs assembled under its aegis; as The Marybone Concert. Being A Choice Collection of Songs, Sung . . . At . . . Marybone, and other Places of Entertainment (London, [1760?].

Smart, and that through this means, singer and poet became acquainted.[84]

Of the remaining subscribers linked with the practice of music, the support of some may be readily accounted for. Charles Burney's elder brother Richard bespoke two copies of Smart's Poems. In the mid-1740s he was securing his living as a violinist and dancing-master in London, though he settled in Worcester a few years later. In 1769 he was numbered among the orchestral players who performed Randall's Ode to Music (words by Gray), for the Installation of the Duke of Grafton as Chancellor of Cambridge University. Fulke Greville's subscription has already been attributed directly to Charles Burney.[85] The pledge of Sir Joseph Hankey, a notable music enthusiast who had helped Burney secure an organist's position in 1749, clearly originated from the same source. Together with John Stanley, the blind organist, Hankey also held a controlling interest in the Swan Tavern concerts, and again, he assisted Burney to obtain a place here later in this same year [1749].[86]

The presence of Charles Avison's name (two copies) may also be explained with a reasonable degree of confidence. Avison (c.1709-1770), composer, instrumentalist and writer, was at the centre of a Newcastle-based coterie of musicians and literary figures. Although he composed some fifty

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84 Lowe is mentioned in Smart's Horatian Canons of Friendship, l.16.

85 Greville and Burney were seemingly introduced by Jacob Kirkman, the harpsichord manufacturer. Fanny Burney provided a lengthy account of their first meeting: see Memoirs, I, 24-36.

86 See Roger Lonsdale, Dr. Charles Burney: A Literary Biography (Oxford, 1965), pp. 23-24, 28. The name of Burney's patron Sir Jacob Ashley, is also in the list of subscribers: see B.L. Add. MS. 48345, fol. 22^{v}.

string concertos between 1742 and 1764, as well as three volumes of harpsichord sonatas and other vocal and instrumental works, Avison is best remembered for his philosophical treatise An Essay on Musical Expression, which was published in 1752. In the course of writing his Essay, Avison was assisted by Gray's friend and literary executor William Mason (1724-1797), who was resident in York at the time, and who was also a member of the same artistic circle.[87] It is likely that Gray solicited Mason to act on Smart's behalf; as Mason had been nominated to a fellowship at Pembroke in 1747 (which he took up on election two years later), he would have felt duty bound, in any case, to support his college's errant poet. And Avison, moreover, was acquainted with Thomas Wharton, who had held a fellowship of Pembroke Hall since 1739, and who was Gray's close friend and confidant.

As the Proposals appended to Smart's first Seatonian Prize Poem indicate, his Poems were to be advertised by music and literature retailers in both Durham and York. This circumstance, alone, would have alerted the general reading public to their intended publication, and presumably accounts for the subscription of one "Mr. Barber, Bookseller, at Newcastle". And in view of his Durham connections, consolidated by the Vanes' continued interest and patronage, Smart

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87 Gray and Mason had been introduced in 1747; see Correspondence of Gray, I, 294-303 (p.298, n.33). Note The Works of William Mason, 4 vols. (London, 1811), III, 396-97 and n. Mason refers to "my friend Mr. Avison" (p.396).

could have expected a high degree of support from the north. Nor was Avison's assistance a transitory matter, for thirteen years later he subscribed to Smart's Psalms volume.

This mention of Mason not only recalls Smart's Cambridge links, but raises, once again, the probability of Burney's influence. According to Fanny, her father first encountered Mason in or around 1747 at the home of Lord Holdernesse, in whose employ Mason eventually entered as private chaplain in 1754.[88] The cleric was also a talented music historian and essayist, who published a series of tracts on church music,[89] and compiled a version of the Psalms for use in York Cathedral. There is conclusive evidence of Mason's continuing charity to Smart, though not to the extent suggested by Draper, who claimed that the poet "was still receiving regular bounty" from his friend in 1774, three years after his [Smart's] death.[90] In a letter to Gray, Mason wrote à propos a temporary amelioration in Smart's condition:

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88 See Lonsdale, Dr. Charles Burney, p.16. They may also have met at the home of Mrs. Cibber in Scotland Yard: see John W. Draper, William Mason: A Study in Eighteenth-Century Culture (New York, 1924), p. 124, n.60; on balance, the first possibility seems the more likely.

89 Essays, Historical and Critical, On English Church Music (York, 1795).

90 William Mason: A Study, p. 133. The error is perpetuated in Percy A. Scholes, The Great Dr. Burney, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1948), I, 135. Draper's reference is to The Letters of Horace Walpole, ed. Peter Cunningham, 9 vols. (London, 1891), VI, 51, n.1. A communication from Mason to Walpole dated 3 February 1774 mentions material assistance extended to a friend in need, who is not, however, Smart.

> This resuscitation of Poor Smart pains me,[91] I was in hopes he was safe in that state where the best of us will be better than we are & the worst I hope as little worse as infinite Justice can permit . . . pray, if you can dispose of a Guinea so as it will in any sort benefit him (for tis too late for a ticket) [for Garrick's productions of Merope and The Guardian] give it for me.[92]

And a few years later, he again applied to Gray concerning the subscriptions he had gathered for Smart's forthcoming version of the Psalms (1765):"I have got about 10 Subscribers to Smart [including divers clergy from the York diocese] & dont know how to transmit him the money . . . one should endeavor to assist him as affectually as possible"; to which Gray, in turn, replied: "I think it may be time enough to send poor Smart the money you have been so kind to collect for him".[93] The pitying tone of these communications forms a poignant and almost inconceivable contrast to the applause with which Smart's ventures were being greeted less than a decade earlier.

But to return to 1750/51 and to Smart's subscribers, the remaining well-wishers, in some cases of lesser significance in the poet's musical biography, serve, nevertheless, to emphasize the diversity of his undertakings. John Worgan

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91 Smart had evidently been subject to a severe illness, as two lines from Jubilate Agno, written in this same year [1759] record: "For they lay wagers touching my life. —— God be gracious to the winners" (B1.92).

92 Letter of 25 January 1759, in Correspondence of Gray, II 613-14.

93 Letter of 28 June 1763, in Correspondence of Gray, II, 801-2; letter of [July 1763], in Correspondence, II, 803.

provided the setting of Smart's Solemn Dirge in 1751 (see Chapter 1, n.48), and his achievements will be examined more closely in connection with Hannah (1764). As organist to Vauxhall from about 1751 to 1761, and salaried composer for two periods — from 1753 to 1765,[94] and again, from 1770 to 1774[95] — his range of associates was extensive. Then there were Smart's fellow-poets who also contributed to the Vauxhall repertoire. Richard Rolt (1725? - 1770), is reputed to have written over a hundred songs, cantatas and miscellaneous pieces for Vauxhall, Sadler's Wells and the other London theatres. The Arnes (father and son) set at least two of his stage entertainments: Eliza (Thomas Arne, 1754), which received a number of performances between 1754 and 1784; and Almena (Michael Arne and Jonathan Battishill, 1764), which was only accorded a limited run at Drury Lane. He met Smart at Vauxhall, collaborated with him in the opening of The Old Woman's Oratory (1751), and was co-signatory to Gardner's Universal Visiter contract of 1755. Rolt remained loyal to Smart, lamenting his misfortunes and working towards his release from confinement, for which exertions

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94 During these years Worgan turned out hundreds of songs for Vauxhall, some of which were published in The Gentleman's Magazine; for instance, "Miranda. Set by Mr Worgan", in XXIII (July 1753), 335.

95 Many of Worgan's songs from this period were gathered into collections, as: The New Ballads Sung This Summer At Vaux Hall: Set by Mr. Worgan (London, 1770). The title page advertised "Hannah, an Oratorio, as it was perform'd at the Kings Theatre in the Hay Market". Altogether, J. Johnson printed 13 books of Worgan's Vauxhall songs, between 1752 and 1761, 1770 (2 books) and 1771.

he and his wife were warmly acknowledged in An Epistle to John Sherratt, Esq.:[96]

> Of all the off'rings thanks can find
> None equally delights the mind;
> Or charms so much, or holds so long,
> As gratitude express'd in song.
>
> (11.1-4)

John Lockman (1698-1771) was a miscellaneous writer who penned many songs and ballads for the Vauxhall programmes.[97] His musical drama Rosalinda, which was set by J.C. Smith and staged in 1740,[98] prefixed the text with "An Enquiry into the Rise and Progress of Operas and Oratorios, with some Reflections on Lyric Poetry and Music" (title page). Both Boyce and Smith provided settings of his poem "David's Lamentation over Saul and Jonathan", which were aired in April 1736 (Boyce) and February 1740 (Smith). Robert Lloyd (1733-1764), a graduate of Trinity College Cambridge (BA 1755), was an intimate of both Bonnell Thornton and Charles Churchill. During his short and dissipated life he edited the St. James's Magazine, contributed essays to various London periodicals, and wrote libretti to comic operas and musical miscellanies. And Bonnell Thornton was another writer who assisted Smart during his madhouse years, notwithstanding the poet's belief that he was forsaken by all his former acquaintances:

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96 Published in Poems By Mr. Smart. viz. Reason and Imagination (London, [1763?].

97 As, for example, "Britannia's Gold-Mine; Or, the Herring-Fishery for Ever. A New Ballad . . . Sung at . . . the Spring-Gardens, Vauxhall", 2nd ed. (London, 1750).

98 Rosalinda, A Musical Drama . . . Set to Music by Mr. John Christopher Smith (London, 1740).

> For the coffin and the cradle and the purse
> are all against a man.
>
> For the purse is for me because I have neither
> money nor human friends.[99]

Although Thornton's career will be discussed later in connection with Smart's Parables, there is one circumstance in the friends' literary relationship which is worthy of note. The two poets were probably introduced by Thomas Arne, who provided a setting of Thornton's burlesque Ode on Saint Caecilia's Day in 1749, which was performed shortly afterwards at Vauxhall.[100] In his satirical preface, Thornton purported to have investigated the historical derivation of several of his instruments. The "Jews Harp, speaks its Origin in its Appelation: And I cannot help thinking, that this was the Harp which David used". And of two other implements he remarked: "I am sorry I can give no certain Account of those two incomparable Instruments, the Salt-Box and the Hum-Strum or Bladder and String; tho' 'tis reasonable to conclude, that the first was usually performed on at Festivals, and the other on more serious Occasions".[101]

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99 Jubilate Agno, Bl.276, 283; this section was written in the autumn of 1759. Fanny Burney also remarked of Smart's trials at this time: "nothing, unhappily, flourishing in the attempts made for his relief, save the friendship of Mr. Burney; in speaking of which in a letter, Kit Smart touchingly says: 'I bless God for your good nature, which please to take for a receipt'" (Memoirs, I, 205).

100 Fustian Sackbut [Bonnell Thornton], An Ode on Saint Caecilia's Day, Adapted to The Ancient British Musick. As it was performed On the Twenty-second of November (London, 1749).

101 "Preface", pp. iii, iv. The second extract was reprinted, with minor variants, in a later edition: Bonnell Thornton, An Ode on Saint Caecilia's Day . . . with an Introduction, Giving some Account of These Truly British Instruments (London, 1763), "Overture", p.3.

These apparent equivocations were taken up by Smart the following year, and his ensuing findings published in "Mother Midnight's Miscellany. Containing, More than all the Wit, and all the Humour, and all the Learning, and all the Judgment, that has ever been, or ever will be by Mary Midnight, Midwife to all the Inhabitants of this Cosmos, and to the Choice Spirits in the Elysian Shades".[102] Under the heading of "A very wise and learned enquiry, concerning the antiquity, excellence, and usefulness, of that melodious musical instrument, call'd, a HURDY-GURDY", Smart directed his article to "all lovers of antiquity, and to all lovers of novelty, and to all who have any curiosity, and to all whom it may concern". His opening invocation characteristically intermixes compliment with self-conceit: "My brother, Fustian Sackbut, having search'd into the antiquity of that curious musical instrument, call'd, a JEWS-HARP: I, to shew my capacity equal (at least) to his, shall point out an instrument to you, of much more harmony, and of greater antiquity; I mean the HURDY-GURDY: by some (tho' ironically) call'd, a Hum-Strum".

Smart's short treatise attributes the instrument's invention to a venerable Chinese sage who employed it on ceremonial occasions to resounding applause. The one-stringed

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102 Published in London, 1751; see Chapter 2, n.58. Notwithstanding Mary Midnight's [i.e. Smart's] disclaimer, it seems equally likely that this, and other "Midwife" publications were all part of an elaborate propaganda exercise designed to boost the circulation of Smart's numerous ventures.

prototype was in use for three thousand years, after which time an unnamed British genius transformed it by the addition of two further strings. In this present form, and in the hands of a master, it produces the most ravishing harmonies, which far surpass the tone of other ancient contrivances. As these instruments have, in time, yielded to its superior musical worth, so the author foretells the same fate for harpsichord, spinet, harp, dulcimer, viols, violin and all modern stringed instruments. Though herself unable to do justice to the hurdy-gurdy's unquestionable worth, Mrs. Midnight reflects that "H—" [Handel] and all degrees of musicians, mindful of its potentially matchless artistry, "modestly decline the use of an instrument, which they could never perform on to any degree of advantage, and whose excellence would be the lanthorn to their ignorance". She also proposes its adoption by the militia, to serve as a regimental herald, and also, by removing the bladder and strings, as a weapon "to knock their enemies on the head". By way of conclusion, she avers that should it "continue in use to the end of the world . . . we shall never be able to discover all its numberless excellencies".[103] And Thornton himself could perhaps take some credit for having initiated this intensive study, for by 1763 he could state: "I make no doubt, but that all, who shall be present at the Performance of this Ode at Ranelagh on the Tenth of June next, will at least commend me for my Endeavours to bring

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103 Mother Midnight's Miscellany, pp. 14-19.

these noble long-neglected Instruments . . . into Notice, whatever Opinion they may have of the Ode itself".[104]

This much-anticipated occasion was described by Burney in a footnote to Boswell's Life of Johnson (third edition):

> In 1769 I set for Smart and Newbery Thornton's burlesque Ode, on St. Cecilia's day. It was performed at Ranelagh in masks, to a very crowded audience, as I was told; for I then resided in Norfolk. Beard sung the salt-box song, which was admirably accompanied on that instrument by Brent, the Fencing-master, and father of Miss Brent, the celebrated singer; Skeggs on the broomstick, as bassoon; and a remarkable performer on the Jews-harp. —— "Buzzing twangs the iron lyre". Cleavers were cast in bell-metal for this entertainment. All the performers of the old woman's Oratory, employed by Foote, were, I believe, employed at Ranelagh on this occasion.[105]

The problem raised by Burney's dating of the performance (1769 and not 1763), has been discussed at length by three critics, and little need be added.[106] It seems reasonable to view the gala as in some sense a benefit for Smart following his release from confinement, in which case either 1760 or 1763 is the more likely possibility. But more importantly, the whole episode demonstrates Burney's continued generosity towards Smart. Notwithstanding this resumption of social

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104 Ode on Saint Caecilia's Day (1763), p.4; dated 30 May 1763.

105 James Boswell, The Life of Samuel Johnson, 3rd ed. [ed. Edmond Malone], 4 vols. (London, 1799), I, 378n.

106 Scholes, The Great Dr. Burney, I, 96, argues for a 1759 dating; Sherbo, Christopher Smart, p.250, opts for 1769; Lonsdale, Dr. Charles Burney, pp. 67, 485-90, favours 1760 or 1763.

contact, however, Smart could no longer provide any literary impetus to Burney's ambitions, and as will be seen in the conclusion, their relationship inevitably dwindled into that of benefactor and suppliant.

But a decade earlier, Smart's subscription list continued to grow apace, and the musician's influence remained as strong as ever. The name of Moses Mendez (d.1758) was there: the wealthy retired stockbroker who penned the libretti for Burney's "New Musical Entertainment called Robin Hood" (Drury Lane), and for Boyce's The Shepherd's Lottery.[107] In 1750 Burney was still performing occasionally in the Drury Lane band, particularly in pantomimes and musical entertainments, and these activities brought him into contact with numerous actors and fellow instrumentalists. And his connection with Covent Garden is of comparable significance, as is the manner in which it was broached. The first recorded public performance of Arne's "God Save the King" was at Drury Lane on 28 September 1745. The anthem's tremendous reception here induced other London theatre managers to adopt it, and Covent Garden took it up in December of this same year to an arrangement by the young Burney. Many years later the eminent musicologist recalled this early commission in a letter of 29 July 1806 addressed to Sir Joseph Banks: "I, then a pupil of Mr. Arne, was desired by some of the Covent

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107 Unlike Robin Hood (1750), The Shepherds' Lottery, first staged on 19 November 1751, enjoyed a successful run of 26 further performances over the following 3 years.

Garden singers with whom I was acquainted, and who knew that I was a bit of a composer, to set parts to the old tune for the new house, as it was then called. . . ".[108]

The manager of Covent Garden in the mid-1740s was the impresario John Rich (1682?-1761). Rich was the first proprietor of Lincoln's Inn Fields on its opening in direct competition to Drury Lane in December 1714. He quickly built up a strong musical tradition at the new theatre, introducing opera, and interspersing plays with vocal and instrumental interludes. Both here and at Covent Garden he developed pantomime to the peak of its popularity, and assumed the role of Harlequin himself from 1717 to about 1750. At Covent Garden, to which management he had succeeded in 1732, he met and acted with Garrick; the two players were linked in a satirical occasional prologue delivered at Smart's Old Woman's Oratory: "'Go, Let your Rich's and your Garrick's know,/That I'll take Vengeance, if they serve me so' ".[109] If Rich's subscription did not come about at Burney's representation, his association with Garrick suggests another likely source. There are two further references to the Covent Garden proprietor: in an anecdote reproduced in The Nut-Cracker, and in the second volume of The Midwife of this same year (1751).[110]

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108 Quoted in William H. Cummings, God Save the King (London, 1902), p.36.

109 Mrs. Midnight's Orations, p.35. A footnote describes Rich as "Late Manager of Covent Garden Theatre", and Garrick as "Manager of Drury-Lane".

110 The Nut-Cracker, p.79; The Midwife, II No.2, 76.

Additional evidence of Smart's theatrical connections is seen in the pledges of Cooke, Foote, Havard and Rosoman. Thomas Cooke (1703-1756) was an author, playwright and librettist, who co-produced operas, penned several musical farces which were performed at Drury Lane, and wrote miscellaneous songs for Vauxhall. Samuel Foote (1721-1777), manager, playwright and actor, was a friend of Francis Blake Delaval. An unremarkable debut as a comic actor at Drury Lane in the 1744/45 season gave way to a career in satirical writing, which, in turn, led to his staging a parodical musical entertainment in the style of Smart's Old Woman's Oratory. The Diversions of the Morning, together with a "Concert of Music", was performed in the Haymarket in April 1747 and subsequently transferred to Covent Garden. A "Dr. Heberden", who is also numbered among Smart's subscribers and was undoubtedly an associate of Burney, is listed as a player in this revue. Following a revival of the entertainment in 1748/49, and other staged ventures at Haymarket, Foote temporarily relinquished his active involvement in theatrical enterprises. But a return to both Drury Lane and Covent Garden as a sporadic actor and comic dramatist, eventually led to his leasing Haymarket Theatre in 1762. After a brief foray to Edinburgh, he returned to Haymarket and continued there as a manager and actor until his death. A "Benjamin Hattley Foote, Esq.," is also listed in Smart's subscribers, and was probably a relation to Samuel Foote.

William Havard (1710-1778), actor and entertainer, was

engaged at Drury Lane from 1737 to 1746, and at Covent Garden for the 1746/47 season. He returned to Covent Garden as a member of Garrick's company during his first year of management, and continued here under his direction for the next two decades. Havard wrote an Anniversary Ode in Commemoration of Shakespeare,[111] which was set by Boyce and sung at Drury Lane in 1756 during a performance of Romeo and Juliet. Smart and Havard could have met at Vauxhall in the late 1740s, but Garrick seems a more likely catalyst. Havard, moreover, was included in the cast of Meropé, acted for Smart's benefit in 1759.

Thomas Rosoman, the well-known actor and proprietor of Sadler's Wells from 1745, subscribed both to Smart's Poems (1752) and to his Psalms. During his management of Sadler's Wells, which he sold in 1771, Rosoman fostered the growth of opera, pantomimes and vocal miscellanies, and employed several composers to provide new musical fare; a trend continued and amplified after Thomas King took over the lease in 1772. Possibly introduced by Thomas Lowe, whom he recruited as a principal vocalist at Sadler's Wells, Rosoman appears to have been a significant figure in Smart's life. He was a signatory to the Universal Visiter contract, and is singled out in Jubilate Agno towards the close of Smart's second period of confinement: "Let Plank, house of

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111 Havard's Ode was praised in The Universal Visiter, No.3 (March 1756), p.127.

Plank rejoice with the Sea Purslaine — God be gracious to Thomas Rosoman & family" (D.156).

Other theatrical and musical figures may be identified as subscribers with less certainty. In many cases, however, their associations with either Burney, Garrick or Arne, or else their documented activity at Drury Lane, Covent Garden or the pleasure gardens, increase the likelihood of collateral connections with Smart.

A "Miss Marr" is noted as a ticket seller at Drury Lane in May 1756, at the same time as Henry Marr the actor was taking part in Fielding's The Miser. Also included in the cast of this production were William Havard and Mrs. Clive. Henry Marr was active at Drury Lane, Covent Garden and Haymarket for some thirty years, from 1740 until about 1770. A "Mr Muilment" in Smart's list could be the dancer of this name who was employed almost exclusively at Drury Lane from 1736 until at least 1747. He frequently appeared in productions which included others of Smart's known subscribers and associates. William Buck was a minor but versatile actor at Covent Garden; playbills show him to have been active there from about 1750 to 1765. Christopher Fawcett is probably a relative of John Fawcett the elder (d.1793), a singer/actor who in his youth had been apprenticed to Arne. In later years he performed extensively at Drury Lane, Covent Garden and the King's Theatre in the Haymarket, as well as at the pleasure gardens. Thomas Baker's name appears in the Vauxhall and Marylebone concerts from 1750 onwards. As with

John Fawcett, so too Baker, took part in theatrical and musical productions staged at all the major London playhouses between 1745 and 1780. "Mr Bennet" could well refer to Pepusch's pupil John Bennet, the singer and hornplayer whom Burney named in a manuscript memoir [c.1748] as a member of the Drury Lane pit band. This is a different musician from the John Bennett who contributed three tunes to Smart's Collection of Melodies (1765). I have not been able to trace a "Mr. Jos. Mawley, of Vaux-Hall", who was evidently employed there in some administrative or executant capacity. There was a minor though active singer/actor called Roberts employed at the major theatres from about 1722 for the next forty years. He frequently appeared in productions together with other subscribers, as Samuel Foote (1747), Beard and Cibber (1748), Lowe — whom he occasionally replaced — (1748–52), and sang in a benefit performance of Arne's burlesque opera Tom Thumb the Great at Covent Garden in May 1751. To conclude this category, a "Mr Walsh" is surely the music publisher John Walsh the Younger, whose firm was to print the Collection of Melodies to Smart's Psalms some fifteen years later. Both Walshs (father and son) specialized in lighter pieces, particularly songs and choruses from the pleasure gardens and opera houses, but they also brought out many scores of Handel oratorios and other large scale choral and instrumental works.

Finally, among remaining subscribers, there are two, at least, of Smart's acquaintances from Cambridge who were eventually to achieve some recognition in the fields of musical theory or

composition. The Rev. Charles Davy (1722-1797), a graduate of Caius College, wrote an exposition of Greek musical modes, and planned an extensive essay on the powers of vocal and instrumental music, which was drafted in manuscript, but never printed. And Spencer Madan from Trinity,[112] whose brother Martin composed several hymns, had many musical interests and contacts.

Altogether, then, Smart could take justifiable pride in the support that his Poems had drawn. Even the names of some of his reputed artistic antagonists were represented: William Kenrick, at one time embroiled in controversy with Garrick, Colman and Goldsmith, but to whom the poet addressed his cordial verse tribute Reason and Imagination;[113] or Francis Stamper the London bookseller, who either published, or colluded in the publication of, A Satirical Dialogue against Othello (1751). An advertisement for Stamper's business which is subjoined to the Dialogue, implies his involvement; but the publisher denied any complicity by way of a disclaimer printed in The General Advertiser of 19 March 1751.[114] By the time his Poems appeared, however, Smart himself was deeply engaged

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112 Note Jubilate Agno, B1.64: "For I bless God in the behalf of TRINITY COLLEGE in CAMBRIDGE. . . ".

113 In Poems By Mr. Smart, viz. Reason and Imagination. See Sherbo, Christopher Smart, pp. 71-72.

114 This connection, which is not noted in Sherbo's biography, could represent little more than literary banter; in any case, there was clearly no lasting ill-feeling between the two men, for the Satirical Dialogue appeared after subscriptions had opened for Smart's Poems on Several Occasions.

in another project, as a brief footnote in The Gentleman's Magazine (1752) indicated: "Since our list of dead Magazines in our last preface, the Old Woman's is defunct, and her ghost appears at her Oratory".[115] Once more Smart had diversified his range of activities. The confusion of theatrical and musical divertissements that formed The Old Woman's Oratory was to assume paramount importance in his biography, from its inaugural enactment in 1751 until that time when he could no longer range freely in London society.

The intention underlying Smart's Oratory is most succinctly expressed in the opening issue of The Gentleman's Magazine for 1752: "Among other diversions and amusements which increase upon us, the town has been lately entertained with a kind of farcical performance, called The Old Woman's Oratory, conducted by Mrs Mary Midnight and her family; intended as a banter on Henley's Oratory, and a puff to the Old Woman's Magazine. — Henley's Oratory they call the slaughterhouse of wit, morals, and divinity".[116] Given the success of The Midwife, Smart's evident flair for dramatic and literary burlesque, and a desire to increase both his income and his notability, it is not difficult to understand how the concept of a theatrical medley should have arisen. And the oratories of Walter Henley, the vociferous Clare-Market evangelist, who was enjoying considerable acclaim at the time, provided

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115 "Preface" to Vol. XXII (1752), [p.vn.].

116 Vol. XXII (January 1752), 43.

a timely foil to Smart's satiric intentions.[117]

The substance of the Oratory itself is best indicated by a prior announcement to the opening concert:

> To-morrow will be exhibited in the Great Room, at the Castle Tavern in Pater-noster-Row, a grand Concert of Vocal and Instrumental MUSICK, by Gentlemen who are Eminent Performers. And, at the same Time, will be open'd and given Gratis,
> The OLD WOMAN'S ORATORY; OR, HENLEY in PETTICOATS.
> To be conducted by Mrs. Mary Midnight, Author of the Midwife, and her Family. There will be four Orations: After the first of which Signore Antonio Ambrosiano, from Naples, will perform a Concerto on the Cremona Staccato, vulgarly call'd the Salt-Box; after the second will be presented a Great Creature on a very uncommon Instrument; after the third, a Solo on the Viol D'Amore, and another Piece by the Great Creature. Then the Candles will be snuff'd to soft Musick by Signore Claridio Molepitano, for his Diversion; being the first Time of any Gentleman's appearing in that Character. And the whole will conclude with an Oration by Old Time, in Favour of Matrimony; a Solo on the Violoncello by Cupid, in Propria Persona; and a Song to the Tune of The Roast Beef of Old England, to which all the good Company are desir'd to join in Chorus. . . .[118]
> The Publication of the next Number of Mrs. Midnight's Magazine will be deferr'd till the 16th Instant, and will contain the Orations deliver'd at this Oratory.[119]

The first allocution was undoubtedly delivered by Smart in the guise of the grizzled old hag, and was reprinted in Volume Three of The Midwife as "The Inauguration Speech of Mrs.

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117 The Midwife printed various diatribes directed against Orator Henley, "my bawling Adversary of Clare Market": III No.3, 98.

118 "The Song . . . To be Sung to the Tune of the Roast Beef of Old England", is printed in The Midwife, III No.2, 60-61.

119 The General Advertiser, No. 5341, 2 December 1751, [fol. 1^{v}]. The same advertisement appeared in No. 5342 for 3 December as "This Day will be exhibited. . . " [fol. 1^{v}].

Mary Midnight, at the opening of her Oratory".[120] In this address the speaker enumerated the aims and subjects of her rhetoric — which included "the Reformation of Manners, and the Satisfaction of the Company" — and pledged to incorporate the suggestions of "all my ingenious Friends". As to the nature of her offerings, "It shall be my Business to contrast Seriousness and Merriment, and to leaven Gravity with Gaiety; in order for which, [here duplicating the material of her advertisement] I have at a most incredible Expence imported Signior Antonio Ambrosiano from Naples, who is the Greatest Creature in the World upon that admirable Instrument the Cremona Staccato, which, out of Derision, in the Vulgar Tongue, and by vulgar People, is commonly called the Salt Box, with many other Articles of a very extraordinary, curious, and delightful Nature". Such are her persuasive powers that she has "prevailed on SIGNIOR CLAUDIO MOLIPITANO, the Italian Count, who play'd the Emperor in the Opera of Alexander . . . to attempt the Candle Snuffing Character for the first Time". The succeeding Prologue opens with a lament on the clamour for novelty, and the extreme lengths to which it has been pursued:

> IN ev'ry Sphere, in ev'ry Age we find,
> The Love of Novelty distracts Mankind;
> The Old, the Young, the Rich, the Poor we see,
> All court this Idol, DEAR VARIETY.[121]

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120 The Midwife, III No.2, 37-42.

121 "The Prologue to Mrs. Mary Midnight's Oratory", The Midwife, III No.2, 57-58. Also reprinted in, and quoted from, Mrs. Midnight's Orations (1763), pp. 28-30 (p.28).

Notwithstanding this satiety, Mrs. Midnight is willing to trust her own judgment in selecting such items as she considers acceptable to her anticipated audiences.

The progress of the Oratory can be traced through the pages of The General Advertiser for 1751/52. After the first performance of 3 December 1751, there was a respite until the 27th, when advance notices intimated the following programme:

Act One

1. A grand Piece with Kettle-Drums and Trumpets. 2. The Inauguration Speech by Mrs. Midnight. 3. Overture by Mr. Handell. 4. A Declamatory Piece on the Jew's Harp, by a Casuist.

Act the Second

1. The Speech of Mrs. Midnight in Defence of her Existence. 2. Overture to Ariadne. 3. Solo on the Viol d'Amor. 4. An Oration on the Salt Box by a Rationalist. 5. March in Judas Macchabeus, with the Side-Drum.

Act the Third

1. The Speech of Old Time to the Good People of Britain. 2. Solo on the Violoncello by Cupid. 3. Song by Mrs. Midnight. 4. Another Solo by Cupid. 5. Overture to Alexander.

An Occasional Prologue by a Gentleman; and an Epilogue to be spoken by Master Hallet, in the Character of Cupid.[122]

The final concert for the year added a "Concerto for the Clarinette" to Act One, "Mr. Handel's Water-piece, with a Preamble on the Kettle-Drums" to Act Three, and an occasional

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122 The General Advertiser, No. 5359, 23 December 1751, [fol. 1^{v}]. Further advertisements were printed in Nos. 5360 and 5391-93 [sic], for 24 to 27 December.

prologue as "spoken by Mrs. Midnight".[123] For these two performances the Oratory was transferred to the New Theatre in the Haymarket, and it alternated between here and the Castle Tavern throughout the season, which closed in May 1752.

The New Year opened in much the same vein, with a "Grand Concert of Vocal and Instrumental Musick" followed by the Oratory, "To be conducted by Mrs. Mary Midnight, and her Family, Being the fourth Time of their Personal Appearance in publick". The "Overture to Sampson" was included in Act Two, and a concerto by Hasse in Act Three.[124] The gentleman performers were now fitted out "in Mask, after the Manner of the German and Roman Comedy", and Mrs. Midnight, ever-solicitous for the comfort of her patrons, announced that "The House will be lighted with Wax Candles".[125] The fifth evening introduced four concertos, for trumpet, French horn, two clarinets and "for several different Instruments", as well as "A Piece of innocent Politicks"; the room, Mrs. Midnight assured her guests, "will be made very warm, and illuminated with Wax-Lights". The sixth concert admitted "A Full Piece", the "Overture in Otho", and "A new Concerto on the Cymbals" into the programme; and on the "Seventh and Last Night, that these Orations will be delivered", the ladies were "particularly desired

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123 The General Advertiser, No. 5394, 28 December 1751, [fol. 1^{v}]; also in No. 5395 for 30 December [fol. 1^{v}].

124 Note Jubilate Agno, C.90: "God be gracious to Hasse and all musicians". Hasse is also mentioned in a poem published in The Student, II No.5, 194-96 (p.196).

125 The General Advertiser, No. 5397, 1 January 1752, [fol. 1^{v}]; No. 5398, 2 January 1752, [fol. 1^{v}].

to come early, that they may be accommodated with the best Seats, and not be crouded as they were the two last Nights".[126]

New and novel acts were constantly being inserted into the proceedings, often performed by "imported" artists of extravagant nomenclature such as "Signor Bombasto" and "Signor Bombazeno", all designed, of course, to parody the taste for itinerant Italian virtuosi. Whatever their abilities, the members of Smart's company were obviously adaptable. This same notice announced a forthcoming concert "At the particular Desire of several Persons of Quality. For the Benefit of Benjamin Hallet, A Child of Nine Years of Age". In addition to the usual Oratory and "Concert of . . . Musick. Consisting of two Interludes to be performed by the best Masters", this gala was to include some "Entertainments . . . which will be expressed in the Bills of the Day".[127]

Benjamin Hallet is named in Jubilate Agno in a versicle that combines a technical differentiation with personal prayer: "For the GERMAN FLUTE is an indirect — the common flute good, bless the Lord Jesus BENJAMIN HALLET" (B1.243). By 1750 the newer German, or transverse flute, was rapidly supplanting the common flute or recorder, to become the instrument on which gentlemen of quality were expected to be proficient. The traversi flute obbligati, as printed on virtually every single sheet folio song, have been noted, and the instrument was

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126 The General Advertiser, No. 5371 [sic], 6 January 1752, [fol. 1^{v}]; No. 5378, 14 January 1752, [fol. 1^{v}]; No. 5383, 20 January 1752, [fol. 1^{v}].

127 The General Advertiser, No. 5392, 30 January 1752, [fol. 1^{v}].

specifically named on playbills for all the theatres and concert-houses. Smart himself, despite a general resistance to innovation as revealed in Jubilate Agno, had, faute de mieux, employed a German flautist for his Oratory (see Walpole's letter following). The young Hallet, in addition to his expertise on the flute, was also a competent 'cellist and actor. As the same General Advertiser notice remarked: "This Child Three Years ago play'd fifty Nights on the Flute, at the Theatre-Royal with great Applause, and the following Year was able to play his Part of the Violoncello, in any Concert". And The Midwife, which printed an epilogue as "Spoken by Master Hallet, in the Character of Cupid", also alluded to his ability to play "admirably upon the Violencello, and in every other Respect has a Capacity greatly beyond his Years. N.B. He is shortly to have a Benefit, at which, 'tis hoped, all Mrs. Midnight's Friends will do him the Honour of their Presence".[128] Further advertisements followed in performances leading up to the charity event, which was duly enacted on 6 February.[129]

The entertainment was poised to resume its accustomed course for the following week, when notice was issued of a "rival" medley, also planned for the Castle Tavern. "Fun and Musick" as the intruding review was entitled, was to be "Interspersed with several extraordinary Performances, particularly . . . A Solo by Mynheer Len Roop from the

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128 The Midwife, III No.2, 61-62; there is further notification of the benefit on p.65.

129 The General Advertiser, Nos. 5393-98, for 31 January to 6 February.

Antipodes. A Solo on the Jew's Harp, in Opposition to the Casuist. With many others equally curious and surprizing". The burlesque was suppressed, however, apparently by special order of the city mayor and aldermen, and never staged. It is generally thought that "Fun and Musick" was the work of William Kenrick. This attribution of extraneous authorship was supported by a disclaimer signed by Mary Midnight, which was printed directly beneath the offending advertisement: "As it has been reported, that I am the Author of the Entertainment advertised to be performed at the Castle-Tavern, in Pater-noster-Row, To-morrow Evening; I must beg leave to assure my Friends, that I know nothing either of the People, or their Performance; and that I shall exhibit my own Entertainment at the New Theatre in the Haymarket, the same Evening".[130] But it is quite possible that the whole business was an elaborate hoax, designed, once again, to increase interest and support for one of Smart's enterprises.

Whatever the origin and consequences of this seeming contretemps, Smart's original venture maintained its established run throughout February and March, enhanced by the illustrious "Performances of several eminent Masters, imported for that Purpose". Signiors Piantofugo and Piatofugocelo joined (or "replaced") Signiors Antonio Ambrosia, Bombasto and Bombazi[e]no, each with his speciality, be it Jew's harp, salt-box, or, in the case

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130 The General Advertiser, No. 5403, 12 February 1752, [fol. 1^{v}].

of "Mother Midnight's Daughter, just arrived from Padua", the French horn. There were further benefits for "Signor Ambrosia" ("Operator on the Cremona Staccato"), Mr. James Lowe (probably a relation to Thomas Lowe), Mr. Church ("Performer on the Jew's Harp") and "Signor Bombasto and Signor Piantofugo". New items included "a Song, in the Character of the Lion", "A Solo in a new Taste", "A Solo of Humour on the French-Horn", and "a new Cantata composed by Signor Philippo Ruge, (Organist of St. Peter's at Rome)".[131]

By the start of April, Smart's "Concert" and Oratory had mustered twenty-one performances. Nor did authorial wit and inventiveness show any signs of flagging. The concert of 1 April introduced "a Concerto and Solo on the Cymbalo by Mr. Noell. Two new Orations by Mrs. Midnight . . . [and] a new Prologue and Epilogue to be spoken and sung by Mr. Toe". Mrs. Midnight could always whet her audiences' appetites by appealing to the unknown: "This Evening Mrs. Midnight's Nephew will entertain her Friends with a very curious Performance"; and two days later, a forthcoming benefit for "A Widow Gentlewoman in Distress" promised "several extraordinary Performances never exhibited before". Mr. Toe and Mr. Noell, in turn, received benefits, as "new Song[s]" and "Full Piece[s]", and an unimaginable "Duetto on two Beesomatoes with a Song", continued to flow from the minds and pens of Smart's collaborators. The concert of 28 April, "For the Benefit

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131 The General Advertiser, No. 5422, 6 March 1752, [fol. 1^{v}]; see Nos. 5407-5436, 17 February to 21 March 1752.

of Joseph Woodbridge, Kettle-Drummer to Mrs. Midnight", promised to be a more than usually grand occasion. The bill of fare included "A Solo by Signor Vancegato, being the first Time of his performing in Publick. A Concerto and Solo on the Bandaloon by Mr. Noell . . . A Concerto on the German Flute by Mr. Lawson . . . And the whole to conclude with a full Piece, with Kettle-Drums, Trumpets, French Horns, &c.". A ball was advertised after this concert to bring the evening to a triumphant close.[132]

For the final month of the season, the "particular Desire of several Ladies of Quality" and "Request of several Persons of Distinction" kept the Oratory going beyond the printed intimation: "Being positively the Last Night". The proceeds from the performance of 9 May were to go to "Mr. Francis Callaway . . . under Misfortunes, being unavoidably involved in a most litigious Chancery Suit". And the search for novelty, however outré, found suitable expression in "a Dance, in the Parisian Taste" by "Monsieur Timbertoe", "an Egyptian Concerto on the Bells of Bacchus", "A new Cantata in the Venetian Taste, compos'd by Sig. Hasse", and "some curious Pieces by Signor Custonelli, just arrived from Italy, being the only Time of his Performance, as he will re-embark on Monday". The last performance seemed to be on 23 May; just over a month later Smart had the satisfaction of announcing: "This Day is finished, And ready to be deliver'd to the Subscribers . . . Poems on Several

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132 The General Advertiser, No. 5445, 1 April 1752, [fol. 1^{v}]; see Nos. 5447-5471, 3 April to 1 May 1752.

Occasions. By Christopher Smart, A.M.". And on 3 August the third number of Volume Three of The Midwife made its long overdue appearance.[133]

It is appropriate at this point, to pause and consider the nature of the "Grand Concert" and Old Woman's Oratory. The parallel appearance of The Midwife numbers enables us to gauge the quality of several orations and addresses delivered at the Oratory. Those pieces printed include "The Virtues of Laughter" and "A Dissertation on Dancing", the latter generated by the introduction of M. Timbertoe on 31 March 1752. Smart himself extolled the efficacy of music and dance: "when I see a Man of a sour, ill-natured, saturnine Disposition, I judge with Shakespear, that he has not Musick in his Soul. — So on the other Hand, when I see a clumsy, awkward, rustic, unmannerly Lout, I am confident he has not learn'd to dance".[134] A further account of M. Timbertoe, the "celebrated one-leg'd Dancer, who perform'd with universal Applause at Mrs. Midnight's Oratory", was given in this same issue. Here Mrs. Midnight asserted that the British-born Toe was first noticed by herself and despatched to France, from which country he returned, fully proficient in the art, to enter and remain in her exclusive service.[135]

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133 The General Advertiser, Nos. 5472-5490, 2 May to 23 May 1752. Smart's Poems on Several Occasions was advertised in No. 5526, 2 July 1752, [fol. 1^{v}]; The Midwife, Volume Three, in No. 416 [sic], 3 August 1752, [fol. 3].

134 The Midwife, III, No. 3, 79-81; 89-92 (p.92). Note Jubilate Agno, C.94: "For I prophecy in the favour of dancing which in mutual benevolence is for the glory of God".

135 The Midwife, III No.3, 108.

As for the musical items, their vaudeville constitution and somewhat facile appeal may be deduced not only from the General Advertiser announcements, but also from a detailed letter directed by Horace Walpole to George Montague on 12 May 1752:

> I was t'other night to see what is now grown the fashion, Mother Midnight's Oratory — it appeared the lowest buffoonery in the world even to me who am used to my uncle Horace. There is a bad oration to ridicule, what it is too like, Orator Henley: all the rest is perverted music. There is a man who plays so nimbly on the kettle drum, that he has reduced that noisy instrument to be an object of sight, for if you don't see the tricks with his hands, it is no better than ordinary. Another plays on a violin and trumpet together; another mimics a bagpipe with a German flute, and makes it full as disagreeable. There is an admired dulcimer, a favourite saltbox, and a really curious Jew's harp. Two or three men intend to persuade you that they play on a broomstick, which is drolly brought in, carefully shrouded in a case, so as to be mistaken for a bassoon or base viol, but they succeed in nothing but the action. The last fellow imitates farting and curtseying to a French horn. There are twenty medley overtures, and a man who speaks a prologue and epilogue, in which he counterfeits all the actors and singers upon earth; in short, I have long been convinced that what I used to imagine the most difficult thing in the world, mimicry, is the easiest. . ." [136]

But Mrs. Midnight was in no doubt of having secured a permanent niche in the history of musical taste and aesthetics:

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136 The Yale Edition of Horace Walpole's Correspondence, ed. W.S. Lewis et al. (New Haven, 1937 — 83), IX (1941), 131.

> You may remember (and I hope Gratitude will never suffer you to forget) the great Improvements I have made in Music and Dancing. Most of the celebrated Performers of all Nations, I engag'd for your Use. SPOONATISSIMA, BOMBAZINA, BOMBASTO, and others, were imported by me; and since that, all the rest have been imported by others: Yet it must be allowed that I led the Way, I brought the Taste in Vogue; and to be the first of the Fashion, must give any Lady a sensible Satisfaction.[137]

One work, however, that was frequently sung in Smart's Oratory has survived in several different editions. The Dust Cart, first published in [1753?],[138] was reprinted at least three times: on two further occasions in or around 1753, and once more some seventeen years later.[139] This burlesque cantata is a setting of an anonymous text by James Oswald, the London composer, publisher and book-seller, whose career was discussed in the opening chapter. Oswald wrote other works in this same style, as The Wheel Barrow a favourite Cantata. Sung at the publick Gardens.[140] And The Dust Cart, itself, generated similar essays, as The Turnspit and The Hay-Stack.[141] The Hay-Stack is a particularly close imitation of The Dust Cart, both in text and in setting:

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137 Mrs. Midnight's Orations (1763), p.9.

138 The Dust Cart, a favourite Cantata Sung in the old Woman's Oratory at the new Theatre in the Hay Market in manner of the Moderns: Set by Mr. Oswald ([London, c.1753]). See Illus. XX, a transcript of an N.L.S. copy, identical to B.L. H.1601 (11).

139 The three [1753?] settings are catalogued in the B.L. under pressmarks H.1601 (11), G.295 (19) and H.1994 (135); the [1770?] edition, The Dust Cart. A favorite Cantata, under G.306 (4). Only minor notational variants distinguish the four printings.

140 Published in [London, 1755?]. The setting displays the same arrangement of recitatives and arias as The Dust Cart.

141 The Turnspit. A Cantata in the manner of the Dust Cart. Set to Musick by Mr. Dibdin ([London, 1770?]); there was also an earlier edition printed in [c.1765]. The Hay-Stack. A Cantata: Set to Musick by Mr. Holmes ([London, 1760?]).

The DUST CART, a favourite CANTATA

Sung in the old Woman's Oratory at the new Theatre in the Hay Market.

in manner of the Moderns: Set by Mr. Oswald.

RECIT.

As Tink'ring Tom the Streets his Trade did cry, He saw his lovely SILVIA Paſsing by, In

Duſt Cart high advanc'd, The Nymph was plac'd with the rich Cinders round her lovely Waiſt,

Tom with uplifted Hands the occaſion bleſt, and thus in ſoothing Strains, the Maid addreſt.

ARIA.

Affettuoso

Oh SILVIA!

While you drive your Carts to pick up Duſt, you ſteal our Hearts, you take our Duſt & ſteal our Hearts, that

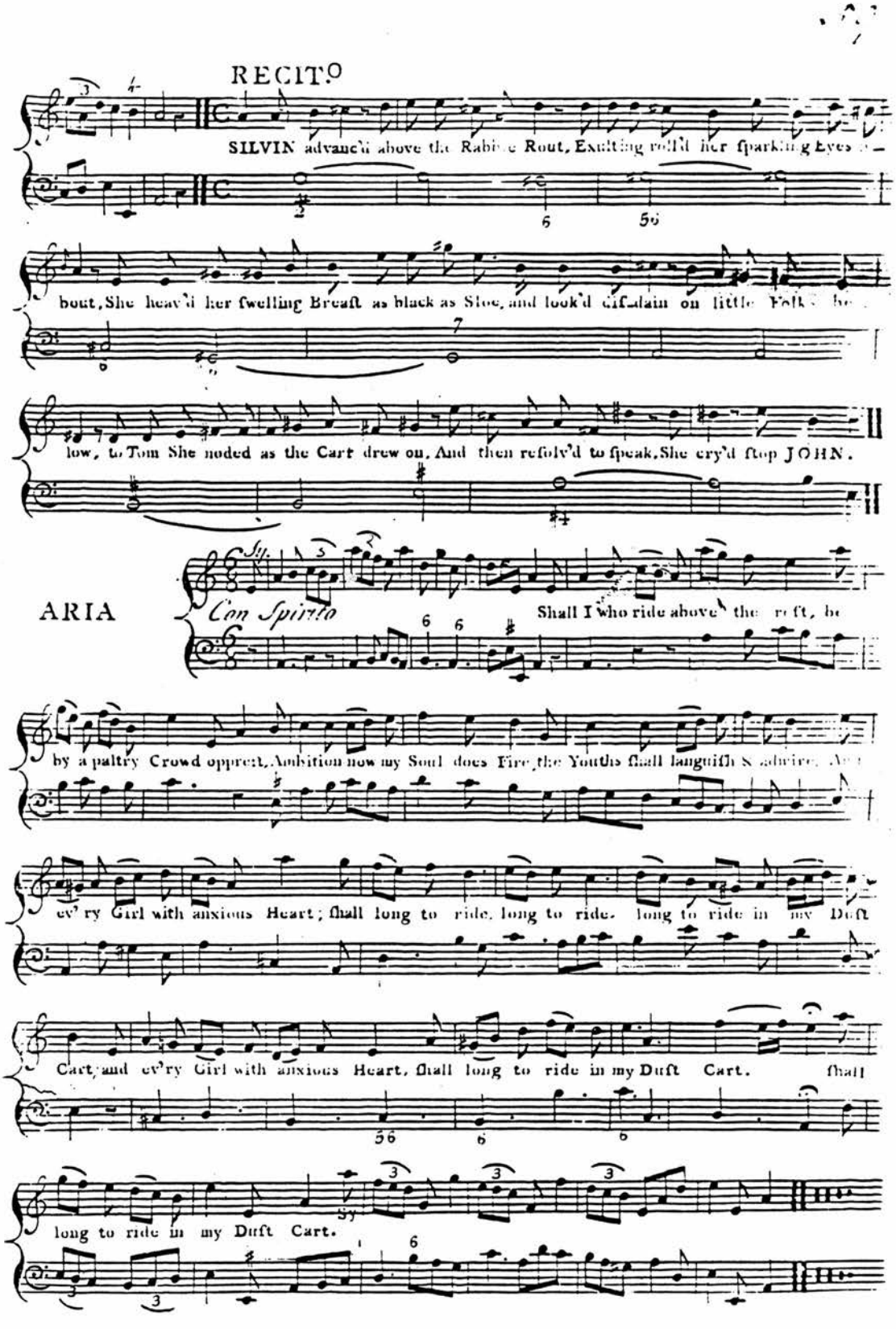
mine is gone alas. is true & dwells a_mong the Duſt - - with you, & dwells - - a_mong - - the

Duſt with you; Oh lovely SILVIA eaſe my Pain. Give me the Heart you ſtole again. Give me my

Heart out of your Cart, Give me the Heart you ſtole a_gain.

Ad lib.

Illus. XX. Oswald, The Dust Cart [c.1753], [reduced]. N.L.S. Mus. Box 157.32.



Illus. XX contd.

As Tink'ring Tom the Streets his Trade did cry,
He saw his lovely SILVIA Passing by,

The Dust Cart, opening recit.

As Paddy on the Hay Stack mounted high,
Beneath his Amie fair did chance to spy,

The Hay-Stack, opening recit.

. . . . . .

Oh SILVIA! While you drive your Carts
to pick up Dust, you steal our Hearts,

The Dust Cart, first aria

O Amie whilst your making Hay
Our Hearts alass You steal away,

The Hay-Stack, first aria

The two cantatas each comprise an opening three-line recitative in $\frac{4}{4}$ time; a $\frac{3}{4}$ aria of six lines; a further three-line $\frac{4}{4}$-time recitative; and a concluding $\frac{6}{8}$-time aria marked Con spirito.

The Dust Cart's popularity is evident, then, from the number of editions and musical counterparts; the words were also printed in a miscellany of airs and ballads "Sung at the Theatres, Gardens, and All Publick Places of Diversion".[142] The poem is a parody of the pastoral tradition in verse, whereby the Elysian glades and gently-gliding streams that shadow Phoebe's and Colin's dallyings, are transformed into the teeming markets of backstreet London. The music, similarly, burlesques contemporary operatic conventions, by incorporating dramatic and decorated cadences, passages of florid ornamentation, portamento, and other histrionic effects. The story tells of Tinker Tom's unrequited love for the fair Silvia, whose comeliness draws all eyes as she goes about her menial tasks. But she forbears to ease her lover's pangs,

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142 The Dust-Cart. A Favourite Cantata, in The Muses Holiday [1757], pp. 149-50.

and exulting in her station, merely tells of how she is universally admired and envied. The setting forms a straightforward vehicle for comic interpretative effects; though not subtle, it succeeds in garbling recognized musical formulae, while at the same time realizing a vocally attractive score. In all probability the work was performed many times during the second season of Smart's Oratory.

It is unnecessary to particularize the programmes of Smart's entertainments any further. The show was reconvened on 7 December 1752 at the New Theatre in the Haymarket, and an advertisement in the renamed Public Advertiser reveals the same jumble of performing casuists and rationalists, together with new items "of a very extraordinary Nature, particularly a Piece by Signor Spoonatissimo, on an Instrument dugg out of the Ruins of Herculaneum, much used by the Ancient Romans, and celebrated by Virgil in his Georgics".[143] The concerts had obviously brought the poet a certain fame, not to say notoriety, which was increased by the efforts of his colleagues Colman and Thornton. An early issue of their periodical The Connoisseur, drew an unfavourable contrast between the musical antiquities of Oxford and Cambridge, and the novelties of London playhouses: "Are those classical instruments the Doric Lute, the Syrinx, or the Fistula,

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143 The Public Advertiser, No. 5650, 7 December 1752, [fol. 1^{v}].

to be compared to the melody of the Wooden Spoons, the Jews Harp and Salt-Box at Mrs. Midnight's?".[144] And a later number published a letter from a wearied correspondent who aimed to counter his wife's "musical phrenzy" by "holding weekly a burlesque Rorotorio, composed of mock-airs with grand accompanyments of the Jew's Harp, Wooden Spoons, and Marrowbones and Cleavers . . . and have actually sent to two of Mrs. Midnight's hands to teach me the art and mystery of playing on the Broomstick and Hurdy-Gurdy".[145]

But long before the Oratory had entered its second season, Smart had shown the first indications of mental illness. The burden of maintaining his numerous commitments led to temporary bouts of alienation, and nor did his marriage in the early part of 1753 appear to provide any long-term stability. The Oratory concluded its second run in March 1753, and two months later, a final Midwife issue appeared, which largely comprised material from these concerts and poems from an earlier period. The next three years, however, showed a steady decline in Smart's fortunes, and there is no conclusive evidence of his taking part in subsequent seasons of the Oratory and "Concert". As late as 1760, in fact, Mrs. Midnight's Concert and Oratory was still being performed at the Little Theatre in the Haymarket, with a list of "the best performers" and a "band of originals". Signiors Bombasto,

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144 The Connoiseur. [sic] By Mr. Town, Critic and Censor-General [comp. George Colman and Bonnell Thornton], I No.17 (23 May 1754), 100.

145 The Connoisseur, II No. 128 (8 July 1756), 773. This article occasioned a reply by "the unfortunate wife of that inelegant . . . husband", which was printed in No. 130 (22 July 1756), 781-84.

Broomsticado and Twangdillo, together with Signora Tambourina, all took part in a concert of 14 February, and a further gala was held on 30 April of this year. The impetus of the first uproarious years was evidently enough to warrant revival of the show, but Smart could no longer claim any direct involvement. He may, indeed, have harboured a deep resentment that the Oratory should have been taken out of his control. For given his years of theatrical involvement and comradeship, it is ironic that he would come to declaim against the stage so bitterly during his incarceration:

> For all STAGE-Playing is Hypocrisy and the Devil is the master of their revels.
> (Jubilate Agno, B2.345)

> For I prophecy that there will be full churches and empty play-houses.
> (C.68)

> For I prophecy that players and mimes will not be named amongst us.
> (C.93)

The Gentleman's Magazine continued to print a few of Smart's poems from 1753 to 1756; his Seatonian essays appeared at the rate of one a year; he started work on his prose Horace; and he wrote occasional verses for the theatres, notably an epilogue to The Apprentice which was produced by his friend Arthur Murphy on 2 January 1756. The Universal Visiter contract was the last venture to which Smart was an active party, and even then he only contributed to the first three issues. By the time

The Nonpareil was published in December 1757,[146] Smart was no longer at liberty; his seven long years of literary and personal exile had begun.

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146 The Nonpareil; Or, the Quintessence of Wit and Humour (London, 1757), comprised a selection of pieces from The Midwife, to which was appended An Index to Mankind.

CHAPTER FOUR SEATONIAN POEMS AND *HYMN*

> Glow, glow, my soul, with pure seraphic fire;
> Deeds, thoughts, and words no more his mandates break,
> But to his endless glory work, conceive, and speak.[1]

When Thomas Seaton, author of *The Divinity of Our Saviour*[2] and Fellow of Clare-Hall, Cambridge for some twenty years, came to compose his will, he bequeathed to his *alma mater* his Kislingbury Estate, the income from which he designated for a specific purpose. A clause in this document dated 8 October 1738 directed that the annual rents should constitute a prize to be awarded to the finest devotional poem by a Master of Arts of the university. The conditions of the bequest specified further that "*the Subject shall for the first Year be one or other of the Perfections or Attributes of the Supreme Being, and so the succeeding Years, till the Subject is exhausted; and afterwards the Subject shall be either Death, Judgement, Heaven, Hell, Purity of heart, &c. or whatever else may be judged . . . to be most conducive to the honour of the Supreme Being and recommendation of Virtue*".[3] From the emolument of £40 were

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1 *Hymn to the Supreme Being, On Recovery from a dangerous Fit of Illness* (London, 1756), st. 13.

2 Published in London, 1719.

3 Prefixed to Christopher Smart, *On the Eternity of the Supreme Being* (Cambridge, 1750), [p.3]; reprinted in each of Smart's Seatonian Prize Poems.

to be deducted the costs of printing the winning entry, and the residue was to be gifted to the successful author. Although the benefactor died in 1741, his will "being disputed by Mr. Seaton's executors, a law-suit commenced between them and the university; which terminating in favour of the latter, the first subject given out according to the above clause"[as quoted supra] was an essay on the eternity of God, announced for open competition in 1750.[4]

By this date Christopher Smart had taken leave of Cambridge for permanent domicile in London. His poetical forays at the time, which were many and various, were doubtless dictated by the frenetic and ephemeral nature of London publishing and entertainment; they are typified by his pseudonymous contributions to The Student (1750-51) and The Midwife (1750-53). Moreover, Smart was shortly to embark on a more ambitious undertaking in conjunction with his Midwife enterprises: the staging of a medley of farcical addresses, musical solos and choruses, which burst on to the London scene as the highly successful Old Woman's Oratory.

It is one of the dichotomous aspects of Smart's life, that amid these roisterous tavern farragoes he should have felt drawn to submit entries for the Seatonian awards over a five-year period. This polarity is more understandable when we recall the frequent and unpredictable bouts of

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[4] "Article LXXV: [Review of Smart's On the Immensity of the Supreme Being]", The Monthly Review, IV (May 1751), 508-10 (p.508).

public prayer intermingled with more mundane affairs as recorded in Jubilate Agno: an (ultimately) insupportable dualism of intention and conduct, indicative of incipient breakdown. The prize poems themselves not infrequently display an indiscriminate and feverish enthusiasm which reflects a mind neither integrated within itself nor anchored to one balanced, controlling impulse. And despite the profusion and breadth of Smart's London activities at this time, there is no assurance of corresponding financial well-being. Apart from the fillip of recognition which a winning Seatonian entry would bring, the increment, though reduced by the printing costs, would not be unwelcome. Indeed, his somewhat presumptuous dependence on the outcome of the contest is attested to by George Dyer, who remarked that Smart "always thought himself certain of success, and used to call the Seatonian prize his Kislingbury estate".[5]

The facts surrounding Smart's achievements are well documented. He was awarded the inaugural laurel for his poem On the Eternity of the Supreme Being in 1750, and continued to uplift the prize for five subsequent years, with the exception of 1754 when George Bally's twenty-seven-page The Justice of the Supreme Being was adjudged the finest entry.[6] According to The Gentleman's Magazine, "This prize

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5 Privileges of the University of Cambridge, 2 vols. (London, 1824), "Cambridge Fragments", II, 94.

6 Published in Cambridge, 1755. Bally, a Fellow of King's College, was again successful in 1756 with his entry, On the Wisdom of The Supreme Being.

has for many years been constantly assigned to the ingenious Mr Christopher Smart, who was not this year [1754] among the competitors".[7] Notwithstanding the possible speculation raised by this uncharacteristic omission, the distinction of Smart's poems was such that when revelation of his clandestine marriage in 1753 led to the inevitable rescission of his fellowship, the Pembroke authorities ordered that "Mr. Smart have leave to keep his name on the College books without any expense, so long as he continues to write for the premium left by Mr. Seaton".[8]

The Seatonian poems were not only highly esteemed in their day by the Cambridge masters. Both On the Eternity and On the Immensity quickly passed through three editions (1750, 1752, 1756, and 1751, 1753, 1757, respectively), and the remaining essays all attained a second reprinting: On the Omniscience (1752), 1756; On the Power (1754), 1758; and On the Goodness (1756), 1756. All five poems were naturally reproduced in Musae Seatonianae. A Complete Collection of the Cambridge Prize Poems,[9] and were given a similarly prominent place in Hunter's edition of 1791. Of these works, Smart's nephew wrote: "[they were] written with the sublimest energies of religion, and the true enthusiasm of poetry; and had the pen of their author stopped with these compositions, they alone would have

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7 "Article 8. The justice of the supreme Being; a poem. By G. Balley", [sic] The Gentleman's Magazine, XXV (February 1755), 93.

8 Decree of 16 January 1754, quoted in Sherbo, p.63.

9 Published in London, 1773.

given him a very distinguished rank among the writers of verse".[10]

On the Goodness apart, the Seatonian poems were well received by the critical periodicals, and were printed as a body in the representative collections of Smart's verse made by Robert Anderson (1795), Alexander Chalmers (1810) and Robert Walsh (1822). An unusual turn to their memorability was provided by the appearance of the oratorio Providence in 1777, the recitatives of which were "selected from the Cambridge Prize-Poems of the late ingenious Mr. Christopher Smart; except where the necessity of a proper connection obliged the Compiler occasionally to add a few lines".[11] The libretto as assembled by John Potter was set for a doctoral exercise by the violinist and composer John Abraham Fisher (1744-1806), and the completed work first performed on 14 May 1777 at a benefit gala for Middlesex Hospital. A further performance on 28 May was succeeded by the Oxford concert on 2 July, and by another airing on

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10 Rev. Christopher Hunter, ed., The Poems, of the Late Christopher Smart, 2 vols. (Reading, 1791), I, xxxiv; the Seatonian poems and the Hymn are printed in I, 53-118. Dyer advanced the same estimation: "had . . . Smart written nothing but his five Seatonian prize poems, he would have been entitled to be ranked among the poets of this country, beyond some who are admitted into 'Dr Johnson's Lives of the English Poets'" — Privileges, II, 183.

11 ["Advertisement to Providence"], quoted in Betty Rizzo, "Christopher Smart's Posthumous Reputation and the Oratorio 'Providence'", Notes and Queries, NS, XXVI No. 1 (February 1979), 45-46 (p.45).

15 February 1780, the last again in aid of the Middlesex Hospital.[12]

Eighteenth-century applause was understandable, for the Seatonian poems amply fulfilled the predilection of the age for bombastic avowal of Divine mechanistics, couched in the pseudo-Miltonic blank verse that had emerged as the proper expressive vehicle for an exalted religious subject. But this convention has long since been effaced, and the most that may now be claimed for the prosody is that it only approaches the cumulative flow and vigour of Milton's line. The heavily Latinate diction, linguistic convolutions and periphrases, compounded epithets and parenthetical asides which conveyed such a curious pleasure to Smart's readers have little appeal to the modern anthologist. As Geoffrey Grigson noted of the poems: they "indicate the God-made, God-declaring, divinely good universe which Smart observes", but "do not condense it and transform it into compelling poetry".[13] The importance of the Seatonian sequence lies rather in its thematic foreshadowment of Smart's post-asylum religious lyrics. In On the Goodness, in particular, "Occasional gleams of remoteness chequer . . . [the] fustian";[14] in all probability those same shivers of insight — for such are the reverses in critical perspective — that led Hunter

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12 See also Grove, VI, 617, s.v. Fisher.

13 Christopher Smart, Writers and their Work No. 136 (London, 1961), p.13.

14 Edmund Blunden, ed., A Song to David with Other Poems (London, 1924), p.16.

to conclude: "Though these are confessedly . . . the most finished of his works, yet even here confidence in genius and aversion to the labour of corrections sometimes prevails over better considerations".[15]

Perhaps the most arresting structural feature of Smart's five meditations is his utilization of the cumulative verse catalogue. This device allowed the poet to develop a particular theme, and also to juxtapose unusual elements in a manner anticipatory both of the undisciplined Jubilate Agno lists and of the polished lyric concision of A Song to David. The unprepared transitions from homeliness to grandeur, so impressive in the latter work, find an origin in the wide-ranging descriptive listings of the Seatonian essays, which hymn the most unbounded and the tiniest ranks of being in rapid succession. And although diffuse and sometimes exhibiting mounting compositional strain, these digressive paragraphs also enabled Smart to cope with the abstract and all-embracing nature of his subject. He was never again to return to circumlocutory Miltonics as a verse form, but through the cumbrous diction and protracted inversions of these early works, the genesis of his artistic and theological predilections can be clearly identified.

On the Eternity of the Supreme Being was, as already stated, the first of Smart's Seatonian poems, and publication

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[15] Poems, (1791), I, xiv-xvi [sic].

of his successful entry was duly announced in The Gentleman's Magazine for April 1750.[16] Smart opens his paean with an apostrophe to the "INCOMPREHENSIBLE" (1.6) God, Whose aid is seen as essential to the act of praise itself;[17] mere human endeavour seems insufficient and unworthy the object of its veneration. His view of music is of an essentially transcendent activity; only through Divine benediction

> May then the youthful, uninspired Bard
> Presume to hymn th'Eternal; may he soar,
> Where Seraph, and where Cherubin on high[18]
> Resound th'unceasing plaudits, and with them
> In the grand Chorus mix his feeble voice?
> (11. 13-17)

Yet veneration is among the God-ordained modes of honour (1. 19) and He must always "be glorified, be prais'd" (1.61); perhaps, then, the hymnist's "song" (1.21), though but a faint refraction of heavenly worship, may glean some inspiration from the "GREAT POET OF THE UNIVERSE" (1.21).

Smart then moves to the main substance of his tribute, paraphrasing scriptural teaching on the pre-existence of God:

> Before 'the Morning-Stars together sang'[19]
> And hail'd Thee Architect of countless worlds
> Thou art—all-glorious, all-beneficent,
> All Wisdom and Omnipotence thou art.
> (11. 26-29)

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16 Vol. XX (April 1750), 192.

17 All quotations are from the first edition; subsequent quotations of the remaining Seatonian poems refer, in all cases, to the first editions.

18 Compare Isaiah 6. 2-3, and Te Deum Laudamus, vv. 3-4.

19 See Job 38.7. Compare Milton, On the Morning of Christ's Nativity:

> But when of old the sons of morning sung,
> While the Creator great
> His Constellations set. . . .
> (st. XII)

Smart's first catalogue which describes the end of time, characteristically opposes the cosmic (sun) to the infinitesimal (glow-worm), concluding that when all worlds have passed away, God Eternal will remain. The "soul of man immortal" (l.109) may also share his sempiternity, rising from its transient slumber at the summons of the archangel's trumpet: "He comes! He comes! the awful trump I hear;/The flaming sword's intolerable blaze" (ll. 111-12). Mankind now divinized may, within the deathless realm of heaven, offer praise befitting the Creator: "'Tis then the human tongue new-tun'd shall give/Praises more worthy the eternal ear" (ll. 129-30). Again, Smart oscillates between consciousness of human inadequacy and obligation: "Yet what we can, we ought" (l.131), and finally accepts that though God be "INEFFABLE" (l.140), yet may He still be worshipped:

> [Let] . . . adoration on her bended knee
> With Heav'n-directed hands confess His reign.
> And let th'Angelic, Archangelic band
> With all the Hosts of Heav'n, Cherubic forms,
> And forms Seraphic, with their silver trumps
> And golden lyres attend:-'For Thou art holy,
> For thou art One, th'Eternal, who alone
> Exerts all goodness, and transcends all praise'.
> (ll. 143-50).

The emphasis throughout this first essay is on a Deity Whose absolute qualities are beyond human comprehension. Smart certainly implies, and almost states, that tribute belongs to angelic practitioners, to whom he assigns the instruments of worship as detailed in the book of Revelation.[20] As his

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[20] See Revelation 1.10; 4.1; 5.8; 8.2,6; 14.2; 15.2.

conception of music broadened, however, he came to see in vocal praise the sole means through which all creation might channel its thankfulness and adoration.

At the time of composing his second Seatonian Prize Poem Smart's fortunes were clearly rising. In addition to the réclame attendant on the initiatory award, his incursions into London's literary spheres had brought him a corresponding measure of prestige, as a critique of On the Immensity plainly indicated: "Mr. Smart has already gained so much reputation by several other small pieces publish'd in the Student, or otherwise, that it would be superfluous in us to say more of his character as a poet".[21] Accordingly, the proemial address to his 1751 entry is suffused with a confidence that finds ready expression in the Psalmist's zealous appeal:

> ONCE more I dare to rouse the sounding string
> The Poet of my God — Awake my glory,
> Awake my lute and harp — my self shall wake,[22]
> Soon as the stately night-exploding bird
> In lively lay sings welcome to the dawn.[23]
> (ll. 1-5)

The trembling uncertainty of Smart's first Seatonian poem, that with God's advocacy "May then the youthful, uninspired Bard/Presume to hymn th'Eternal" (ll.13-14), has now receded as the poet equips himself with David's instruments of praise.

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21 Monthly Review, IV, 509.

22 See Psalm 57.8

23 On the Immensity of the Supreme Being (Cambridge, 1751). Compare Mark 13.35.

His theological boldness in assuming a post-Davidic persona suggests that Smart was courting the impulse to preternatural expression which he eventually experienced in the composition of A Song to David. As the review already cited innocently remarked: "Mr. Smart has kept that most divine poet the Psalmist in his eye, almost through the whole of this work, and finely imitated him in several passages".[24] By the 1760s, however, any doubts were entirely eclipsed, as though the pious, self-regarding rationality of Smart's critics had forced and sustained a higher note of exultation from the poet, confirmed in his salvation and convinced of his calling: "For by the grace of God I am the Reviver of ADORATION amongst ENGLISH-MEN" (Jubilate Agno, B2. 332).

Following this startling opening, Smart immediately sets about refining the concept of praise as presented in his first Seatonian poem. The division between reasoning man and sentient Nature is broken down as the poet interprets all spontaneous activity in terms of vocal worship:

> List ye! how nature with ten thousand tongues[25]
> Begins the grand thanksgiving, Hail, all hail,
> Ye tenants of the forest and the field!
> My fellow subjects of th'eternal King,
> I gladly join your Mattins, and with you
> Confess his presence, and report his praise.
> (ll. 6-11)

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24 Monthly Review, IV, loc.cit.

25 Compare I Corinthians 14.19.

As one modern critic suggests, "there are hints of the sense of designed being [in On the Immensity] which makes A Song to David peculiarly religious",[26] and Smart's succeeding catalogues enumerate all phenomena which, by revelation of their functioning, attest to the immeasurability of the Divine handiwork. Smart's claims for God's celestial omnipotence, "where the Planets/Weave their harmonious rounds, their march directing" (11.30-31) anticipates his treatment of harmony of the spheres in several of his Psalm paraphrases, and foreshadows the more intricate formulations of Jubilate Agno.

The immanent God is also revealed in lesser creation:

> Nathless conspicuous in the Linnet's throat
> Is his unbounded goodness — Thee her Maker,
> Thee her Preserver chants she in her song;[27]
> While all the emulative vocal tribe
> The grateful lesson learn. . . .

Characteristically Smart conceives of God as the Sustainer of life: a function to which even the birds respond with songs of gratitude. And finally, He dwells in man himself:

> . . . in that frame
> So fearfully, so wonderfully made,
> See and adore his providence and pow'r. . . .

Smart complies with his own injunction in the leaping phrases with which he customarily dedicates his powers of utterance:

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26 J.B. Broadbent, ed., A Song to David (Cambridge, 1960), p.x.

27 Compare Jubilate Agno, A.111: "Let Jogli rejoice with the Linnet, who is distinct and of mild delight".

> I see, and I adore — O God most bounteous!
> O infinite of Goodness and of Glory!
> The knee, that thou hast shap'd, shall bend to Thee,
> The tongue, which thou hast tun'd, shall chant thy praise,[28]
> And, thine own image, the immortal soul,
> Shall consecrate herself to Thee for ever.
> (ll. 140-45)

These concluding lines are central to an understanding of Smart's utilization of musical imagery in a number of ways. His association of prayer with music is a prominent and recurrent theme in all the religious post-asylum works. The parallelism of lines 142 and 143 similarly conjoins prayer and praise: an alliterative and conceptual doublet which the lyric form would enable him to reiterate with ease. And lastly, his aspiring personal commitment seems ill-matched with the mutability and fragility of his London intrigues. Again, it is not difficult to glimpse the spectre of the madhouse underlying such painful disjunction of intention and reality.

Smart's third Seatonian poem was, with some solemnity, dedicated to "The Most Reverend His Grace, the Lord Arch-Bishop of Canterbury".[29] Although Smart's success was once more approvingly noted in The Monthly Review,[30] Sophia Blaydes considers On the Omniscience to be "full of erudition, pomposity and didacticism" and counted "among the worst

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28 Compare Isaiah 45.23: Romans 14.11.

29 On the Omniscience of the Supreme Being (Cambridge, 1752), [p.1].

30 "Article XIV", The Monthly Review, VII (December 1752), 474-75: "To this ingenious gentleman mr. Seaton's reward has again been assigned, for this performance" (p.475).

[poems] of the eighteenth century".[31] Certainly the essay is marked by recondite terminology and ostentatious language; moreover, the numerous elisions and tortuous inversions which impart the required number of stresses lend an undeniably pedestrian bearing to the whole. Despite this laborious technique, Smart's two-fold theme is clearly discernible: praise of God and delineation of the miracle of natural instinct.

The opening apostrophe invokes the Greek muse Urania, patroness of astronomy, whose symbols were (appropriately) the globe and the compass. She was sometimes accounted the mother of Linus the musician, and Smart decks her out in images of pomp and minstrelsy:

> ARISE divine Urania with new strains
> To hymn thy God, and thou, immortal Fame,
> Arise, and blow thy everlasting trump.
> All glory to th'Omniscient, and praise,
> And pow'r, and domination in the height![32]
> (ll. 1-5)

The succeeding catalogues of being depict "Instinct" as a God-infused quality given freely to all creation: "What is that secret pow'r, that guides the brutes,/Which Ignorance calls instinct? 'Tis from thee" (ll. 31-32). When "Philomela . . . /Takes her melodious leave, who then's her pilot?" (ll. 80, 83) asks the poet, and even the bees

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31 Christopher Smart, pp.76, 77.

32 Compare 1 Peter 4.11, 5.11; Jude 25; Revelation 1.6.

know instinctively how to pollinate: "From various herbs, and from discordant flow'rs/A perfect harmony of sweets compounds" (11.152-53).[33] Surrounded by earth's wonders and by her bounty, mankind must emulate nature's involuntary worship and offer, in turn, the riches of a thankful heart:

> . . . nor cease to chant
> ALL GLORY TO TH'OMNISCIENT AND PRAISE,
> AND POW'R AND DOMINATION IN THE HEIGHT!
> And thou cherubic Gratitude, whose voice
> To pious ears sounds silverly so sweet,
> Come with thy precious incense, bring thy gifts,
> And with thy choicest stores the altar crown.
> (11.181-87)

As in On the Eternity and On the Immensity, the third essay "closes with a stirring climax, a surging, emotional peroration in which the pious poet speaks out his message of adoration and praise and prayer full voice".[34] The language of On the Omniscience shows Smart advancing further towards his conception of ceaseless veneration as the only fit response to God's munificence.

On the Power of the Supreme Being, which was awarded the Seatonian prize for 1753,[35] takes as its theme the "Grand

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[33] This image was to reappear in the Song as an analogue to the musician's art:

> Sweet the musician's ardour beats,
> While his vague mind's in quest of sweets,
> The choicest flow'rs to hive.
> (st. LXXIII)

[34] Ainsworth and Noyes, p.86.

[35] See The Monthly Review, X (January 1754), 78.

musick of omnipotence" (1.7):[36] the disruptive natural phenomena of earthquakes and thunder that reveal God's mastery and communicate His presence. The association of stupendous portents with seminal creativity derives, in essence, from the book of Genesis, though Smart was to expand the image during his confinement into a distinctive interpretation of cosmic music:

> For THUNDER is the voice of God direct in verse and musick.
> For LIGHTNING is a glance of the glory of God.
> (Jubilate Agno, Bl. 271, 272)

Again, the early lines: "'Tis thy terrific voice, thou God of power,/'Tis thy terrific voice; all nature hears it" (11.8-9), are precursory to the poet's listing of "spiritual musick" which encompasses "the thunder-stop . . . the voice of God direct" (Jubilate Agno, B2.584, 585).[37] Smart sustains the musical language as he compares these wonders to God's Absolute Power:

> 'Twere but the ceasing of some instrument,
> When the last ling'ring undulation
> Dies on the doubting ear, if nam'd with sounds
> So mighty! so stupendous! so divine!
> (11.26-29)

The marvels of "the incorporeal worlds" (1.19), all the embodiments of God's ascendancy, are enjoined "To celebrate and magnify your Maker" (1.77); the stupendous and the "works of a minuter mould" (1.78) alike swell the chorus of praise.

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36 On the Power of the Supreme Being (Cambridge, 1754).

37 Note also Psalm 29.3: "The voice of the LORD is upon the waters: the God of glory thundereth. . . . "

Anticipating the methodology of A Song to David, Smart concludes his poem with reference to God's greatest Act: expression of His Divine selfhood in the Incarnation. A final hymn to Christ foretokens His reign in heaven as King of glory. Throughout this work, Smart's extensive use of alliteration, parallelism, reiteration of salient epithets or phrases, and his feeling for the sound quality of words, are amply displayed. These linguistic devices, harnessed to an ecstatic representation of physical prodigies, did not pass unnoticed by The Gentleman's Magazine, which noted: "The usual prize was adjudged to Mr. Smart, for this poem, of which we cannot deny our readers the following specimen, tho' it may encrease their desire to see the whole" [quotes 11.8, 13-29].[38]

Similar plaudits, however, did not greet Smart's fifth and final Seatonian poem On the Goodness of the Supreme Being, which was dedicated to the Earl of Darlington and printed at Cambridge in 1756. The Gentleman's Magazine merely noted its appearance under the list of books published in March of that year,[39] and The Monthly Review's lengthy critique regretfully concluded: "we cannot help repeating, that the poet has not done justice to his subject".[40] After failing to submit an

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38 "Article 23", The Gentleman's Magazine, XXIV (January 1754), 49.

39 "[Item] 62", Vol. XXVI (March 1756), 144.

40 Vol. XIV (June 1756), 554-57 (p.557).

entry for 1754, Smart rushed On the Goodness off to Cambridge just in time to meet the deadline for 1755,[41] and this urgency of composition seems reflected in the breathless transitions of subject that prefigure the condensed appositions of A Song to David.

The poem opens with an extended address which immediately recalls the corresponding preliminary to On the Immensity. But in this invocation to David Smart now presents the Psalmist in an Orphic guise:

> ORPHEUS, for so the Gentiles call'd thy name,
> Israel's sweet Psalmist, who alone couldst wake
> Th'inanimate to motion; who alone
> The joyful hillocks, the applauding rocks,
> The floods with musical persuasion drew;
> Thou who to hail and snow gav'st voice and sound,
> And mad'st the mute melodious!
> (ll.1-7)[42]

Smart's appeal to the Greek poet was not, in itself, a new departure, for he had invoked Orpheus alone in "Ode IV. On The Sudden Death of a Clergyman": "IF, like th'Orphean lyre, may song could charm/To hope the Thracian's magic power to prove" (ll.1-2), and in The Hop-Garden:

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41 See Hunter, ed., I, xvi.

42 On the Goodness of the Supreme Being (Cambridge, 1756).

> 'Twas thus the Thracian, whose all-quick'ning lyre
> The floods inspir'd, and taught the rocks to feel,
> Play'd before dancing Haemus, to the tune,
> The lute's soft tune!
> (Book One, ll.389-92)[43]

But Smart's footnote to his opening line of On the Goodness read: "See this conjecture [the David/Orpheus identification] strongly supported by Delany, in his Life of David". Although Christian/classical synthesis was not unknown — Milton in his Nativity Ode, for instance, had honoured Christ as "the mighty Pan"[44] — Delany's theory of Orpheus as a "copy, industriously varied from the great, authentick, undoubted original", was the most sustained articulation of this particular thesis.[45] The Cambridge Platonist Ralph Cudworth, had anticipated Delany in asserting Orpheus's historical authenticity: "the father or chief founder of the mythical and allegorical theology amongst the Greeks, and of all their most arcane religious rites and mysteries",[46] but to most writers the Orpheus legend merely provided a useful touchstone in defining

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43 Poems on Several Occasions (London, 1752); note "Marianne's soft Orphean voice" in The Hop-Garden, Book Two, l.89, and "Quàm lentè saltaverunt post Orphea montes": "Materies Gaudet Vi Inertiae" (1741), l.42 (Poems (1752)). See also A Poetical Translation of the Fables of Phaedrus (London, 1765), Book Three, "Prologue to Eutychus":

> Whose voice could tenderness infuse
> To solid rocks, strange monsters quell'd,
> And Hebrus in his course with-held.

44 On the Morning of Christ's Nativity, st. VIII.

45 [Patrick Delany], An Historical Account of the Life and Reign of David, 2nd ed., 3 vols. (1740; London, 1740-42), I (1740), 196; see I, 195-207, for Delany's full argument.

46 The True Intellectual System of the Universe, 2nd ed., 2 vols. (1678; London, 1743), I, 294-308 (p.294).

the nature, and by implication the superiority, of David's art.[47]

Delany's reasoning was based on linguistic, historical, biographical and anthropomorphic correspondences between the fabled Orpheus of Thrace, son of Apollo, and the chronicled David in the wilderness of Paran. Both figures were monarchs and accomplished lyre-players; both exercised command over the natural realms of creation; both were poets and prophets with remarkable insights into the supernatural — Orpheus was an initiate in sacred mysteries; David performed miracles through spiritual communion and prayer — and both were artists par excellence in hymnology and ceremonial dancing. Notwithstanding this similitude, Delany concluded indecisively, observing the ease with which myth might be wrought upon the foundations of truth. Sir Philip Sidney had also linked Orpheus with David; although "in a full wrong divinitie" the Greek figure was the artistic progenitor to Hebraic writers, and one who had expressed the "inconceivable

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47 See W.[illiam] S.[layter], The Psalmes of David (London, 1643), wherein David appears as the "Israelitish Orpheus, or Judean Arion, the excellent Musitian, curious Lyrique, and sweet singer of Israel": "To the Reader", sig.A4^{r}. As the latest editor of Jubilate Agno has noted, elements of the gnostic cult of Orphism anticipated Christian thought: Karina Williamson, ed., The Poetical Works of Christopher Smart. Volume One: Jubilate Agno (Oxford, 1980), p.96, n.54.

excellencies of GOD".[48] To eighteenth-century poets in general, Orpheus had ceased to be a mystical oracle, and only furnished a decorative figure of speech, tinged with extra-mundane suggestiveness. But for Smart, who favoured absolutist stances, no equivocation was possible:

> For the story of Orpheus is of the truth.
> For there was such a person a cunning player on the harp.
> For he was a believer in the true God and assisted in the spirit.[49]
>
> (Jubilate Agno, C.52-54)

Smart's identification of the two poet-musicians is reinforced further by the second verse paragraph of On the Goodness. Whereas the imagery of his opening tribute was fashioned from Orphic legends, the succeeding lines turn immediately to the biblical account of David's cure of Saul (see Appendix I). In imploring some measure of the Psalmist's singleminded ardour Smart proposes that his earthly song might form a worthy counterpart to celestial minstrelsy:

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48 An Apologie for Poetrie (London, 1595), sig. $C2^{v}$. See also W.K.C. Guthrie, Orpheus and Greek Religion (London, 1935), pp.39ff.

49 Compare: "Orpheus . . . acknowledged one supreme unmade Deity, as the original of all things": Cudworth, I, 299.

> - in this breast
> Some portion of thy genuine spirit breathe,
> And lift me from myself, each thought impure
> Banish; each low idea raise, refine,
> Enlarge, and sanctify; — so shall the muse
> Above the stars aspire, and aim to praise
> Her God on earth, as he is prais'd in heaven.
>
> (11.11-17)

Momentarily, however, the magnitude of God's revealed excellence deters the poet from his appointed task:

> Where shall the tim'rous bard thy praise begin,
> Where end the purest sacrifice of song,
> And just thanksgiving?
>
> (11.21-23)

In answer to this question Smart adverts to terrestrial life, more especially to songbirds, in whose activities he sees a paradigm of Divine generation and nourishment. This first extended catalogue pictures the birds in a reciprocal mode of existence: through joyful exercise of their inborn faculties honouring the Deity from Whom they derived these same attributes:

> Without thy aid, without thy gladsome beams
> The tribes of woodland warblers wou'd remain
> Mute on the bending branches, nor recite
> The praise of him, who, e'er he form'd their lord,
> Their voices tun'd to transport, wing'd their flight,
> And bade them call for nurture, and receive;
> And lo! they call; the blackbird and the thrush,
> The woodlark, and the redbreast jointly call;
> He hears and feeds their feather'd families,
> He feeds his sweet musicians . . . [50]
>
> (11.45-54)

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[50] One eighteenth-century reviewer remarked of this section: "The little favourite of the poets, the nightingale, Smoothing the rugged brow of night, is here forgotten" — The Monthly Review, XIV (June 1756), 555.

Unusual, though, in a poetic tribute of this nature, is Smart's solicitude towards the common or the repulsive, for he acknowledges that "even those instruments in the universal orchestra which offend his own ears produce a discord which, in Pope's phrase, is really 'harmony not understood'". "Th' invoking ravens in the greenwood wide;/. . . tho' their throats coarse ruttling hurt the ear",[51] also convey their gratitude: "They mean it all for music, thanks and praise" (11.55-57).[52] As David perceived the indwelling Divinity of all created matter, so Smart interpreted his poetic calling as that of redirecting innate sanctity to its primal Source. "I speak for all" he wrote a decade later in "Hymn VI: The Presentation of Christ in the Temple" (1.41); for all those "creatures of thanksgiving,/Which are harmoniz'd to bless" ("Hymn III: Epiphany", 11.33-34), be it the "raven urgent in his pray'r" ("Hymn XIV: The Ascension of Our Lord Jesus Christ", 1.19) or the mystical communicants in Christ's Nativity: "Spinks and ouzles sing sublimely,/'We too have a Saviour born'" (Hymn XXXII:

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51 As Blaydes notes, Smart's Horatian propensity towards unusual coinages is exemplified in the noun "ruttling", which derives from the Medieval word meaning "throaty noise" (Christopher Smart, p.80).

52 Compare Jubilate Agno, B1.19: "Let Ehud rejoice with Onocrotalus, whose braying is for the glory of God, because he makes the best musick in his power"; note also A.52: "Let Elihu bless with the Tortoise, which is food for praise and thanksgiving". Although listed among the unclean beasts in Leviticus 11.29, the tortoise in its "adversity" is a begetter of worship.

The Nativity of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ", ll.29-30.[53]

The songsters' spontaneous adoration serves to point up what Smart less happily construed as man's "ingratitude" (l.58). Yet humanity carries within itself an impulse towards concerted worship:

> . . . for hark the organs blow
> Their swelling notes round the cathedral's dome
> And grace th'harmonious choir, celestial feast
> To pious ears, and med'cine of the mind;
> The thrilling trebles and the manly base
> Join in accordance meet, and with one voice
> All to the sacred subject suit their song.
> While in each breast sweet melancholy reigns
> Angelically pensive, till the joy
> Improves and purifies. . . .
> (ll.59-68)

This section of the poem, which appears to be modelled on Milton's description in "Il Penseroso", reveals Smart's "feeling for the accidentals of ritual orthodoxy", as Fr. Devlin approvingly notes.[54] Again, with a characteristic turn to an otherwise unremarkable elaboration of sacred music, Smart introduces "The cherub Gratitude" (l.72) as frequenting the cathedral dome. "Her voice", he writes, "Is more than voice can tell; to him she sings,/To him who feeds, who clothes and who adorns" (ll.76-78). Appropriately, he fashioned this virtue into the subject of his lyric "On Gratitude: To the Memory of Mr. Seaton", in which he honoured his benefactor

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53 Hymns and Spiritual Songs, in A Translation of the Psalms (1765), pp.157-83.

54 Poor Kit Smart, p.74.

by invoking a "private religious version of the classical Muse":[55]

> O Muse! O Muse! Voice & Lyre,
> Which are together Psalm of Praise
> From heav'n the kneeling bard inspire
> New thoughts, new grace of utt'rance raise.[56]
> (11.1-4)

In On the Goodness Smart conceives of gratitude as the only response befitting God's "immense" bounty, and bids all nations unite in musical homage: "rise, attend,/Attest, and praise, ye quarters of the world!" (11.85-86); and again, "Forth from ten thousand temples pour his praise;/Clad in the armour of the living God" (11.118-19). A concluding declamatory address ushers in "the general chorus of all worlds" when mankind begins the "song of charity . . ./In strains seraphic, and melodious pray'r" (11.124-26), and anticipates the final conjunction of earthly and heavenly forces:

> "O all-sufficient, all-beneficent,
> Thou God of goodness and of glory hear!
> Bless all mankind, and bring them in the end
> To heav'n, to immortality, and THEE!"
> (11.136-39)

Smart's final Seatonian poem thus forms a thematic denouement to the quest for an expedient form of musical

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55 Dearnley, p.31.

56 Quoted from John Drinkwater, A Book for Bookmen (London, 1926), p.138; compare Smart's text: "O Muse! O Music!", in Brittain, ed., Poems by Smart, p.234.

praise by which humanity might re-echo angelic homage. The disunion of the poet's "feeble voice" and "th'unceasing [celestial] plaudits" in his first Seatonian essays finds resolution in the conviction that all doxologies, indeed, all rightly-directed activities are worthy of the object of their homage. Even from those elements incapable of petition, Smart perceives a grateful acknowledgement of the Deity. His assumed sense of gratitude fashions, in fact, the Davidic response in all Smart's devotional lyrics; its inverse, "ingratitude", he denounces as "the blackest crime of all" (Psalm XIX, l.77). Highest in Smart's scale of earthly values, and refined in Christian terms to an overwhelming sense of wonder at Divine munificence and Grace, the virtue of "Gratitude" rings clarion-like through his complete religious canon: apotheosized as a cherub (On the Omniscience, ll.6-9); dwelling in God's holy sanctuary (On the Goodness, ll.71-80); inspiring heartfelt thanks ("Hymn XXII: Gratitude" (Hymns for . . . Children) and Hymn to the Supreme Being); revealed through the Psalms — that great "Book of Gratitude" — and transformed into the raison d'être of Smart's ultimate tribute, A Song to David, which was, as the author relates, "composed in a Spirit of Affection and thankfulness".[57]

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57 "Advertisement", in Proposals for Printing . . . The Psalms of David (London, 8 September 1763). Eighteenth-century poems on "gratitude" appeared sporadically, as W. Dodd, "Gratitude, an ode", The Christian's Magazine, I (September 1760), 231, or "Ode to Gratitude", in The Poetical Works of William Woty, 2 vols. (London, 1770), I, 104-6; but no one writer approached Smart's singlemindedness.

Notwithstanding the climactic resolution and confidence of *On the Goodness of the Supreme Being*, Smart appears to have suffered at least two protracted bouts of delirium by 1756. His *Hymn to the Supreme Being*, published in that year, is prefixed with a sober testimonial to Dr. Robert James, to whose miraculous fever powders Smart attributed his deliverance on a third occasion from a "violent and dangerous" disorder.[58] This poem, in all probability the last that Smart penned before his confinement, is suffused with ardent gratitude both to Dr. James and to the "all-sufficient Lamb" (st.7). In its indeterminate critique of the *Hymn*, *The Monthly Review* alighted on this same merit of gratitude to exonerate Smart from an otherwise unfortunate lapse of poetic judgement: "As this poem seems to have been the genuine effusion of gratitude, it would be cruel, and invidious, to make it the subject of criticism; tho', otherwise, not the least exceptionable of this gentleman's performances. It is an instance, however, of the goodness of his heart, if not of the fidelity of his muse". A similar estimation was advanced by the *Monthly*'s sister periodical, which owned itself disappointed in its expectations, but recorded, nevertheless, the unaffected sentiments of the author: "When what flows from the poet's pen is dictated by the feelings of his heart, we are seldom displeased at his productions;

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58 *Hymn to the Supreme Being*, [p.3]. The *Hymn* was printed in its entirety in Rev. James Plumptre, *A Collection of Songs*, 3 vols. (London, 1824), III, 404-10.

and it has been observed, that men generally write better concerning themselves, than on any other subject. Mr. Smart, notwithstanding, with both these advantages hath not given us the pleasure which we expected to find in this performance, in which there is more gratitude than genius, and more piety than poetry".[59]

The Hymn opens with a description of the mortally ill King Hezekiah of Judah, whose prayers for deliverance were answered by a fifteen-year reprieve from death.[60] Although Smart, unlike the Judean monarch, could not claim a blameless past, he none the less owns himself redeemed from his illness to pursue a renewed religious and poetic vocation: "the mind's at large once more,/To love, to praise, to bless, to wonder and adore" (st.8). An outpouring of thanksgiving to the Deity:

> All glory to th'ETERNAL, to th'IMMENSE,
> All glory to th'OMNISCIENT and GOOD,
> Whose power's uncircumscrib'd . . .
> (st. 10)

is succeeded by a passage wherein he sets forth his subsequent life's work, specifically consecrating his powers to Divine worship and service:

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59 "Article XXII. Hymn to the Supreme Being", The Monthly Review, XV (August 1756), 202; The Critical Review, I (June 1756), 482.

60 See Isaiah 38; also II Kings 20 and II Chronicles 32.

> Glow, glow, my soul, with pure seraphic fire;
> Deeds, thoughts, and words no more his mandates break,
> But to his endless glory work, conceive, and speak.
> (st.13)

Smart incorporates the image of a retuned instrument to convey his restored mental balance which would, in turn, enable him to pursue his idée fixe of prayer and praise:

> Ye strengthen'd feet, forth to his altar move;
> Quicken, ye new-strung nerves, th'enraptur'd lyre;
> Ye heav'n-directed eyes, o'erflow with love. . . .
> (st.13)

And in commending the virtue of penitence Smart similarly drew on the soul's visionary harmony as the most acceptable offering to God: "The list'ning angels lay their harps aside/To hear the music of thy contrite heart" (st.14).

The final stanzas reveal the intensity of Smart's religious fervour before it turned to monomania, and provide explicit insight into the nature of his malaise. Although the Hymn concludes in joy at the plenitude of creation, Smart also asks that charity might be implanted in his own heart, "That I may live for THEE and THEE alone" (st.18). This personal plea is the more poignant, heralding as it does the start of seven years of recurrent attacks of distraction culminating in periods of partial oblivion. Smart himself evidently interpreted his recovery as a rebirth of wonderment and praise; The Critical Review was more unconsciously discerning when it remarked: "We look upon this gentleman as a kind of barometer in writing, whose risings and fallings are extremely

variable and uncertain. We are only sorry therefore that the mercury is at present so low".[61] In this cryptic manner was the die cast for the reception of Smart's works over the remaining years of his life.

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[61] Vol. I, loc.cit.

CHAPTER FIVE THEOLOGICAL AND MUSICAL CONSIDERATIONS

> For they that study the works of God are peculiarly assisted by his Spirit.[1]

In critically examining any poet as prolific as Smart, inevitably there are discovered in his works certain motifs or strands, which, appearing with discernible frequency, evoke the distinguishing literary traits of the writer in question. Many of the themes thus arising and pertaining to Smart's religious canon, are a personal expression of the exactions of Divine inspiration. Whereas the verse assembled for his Poems on Several Occasions (1752) and for the Seatonian Prize Poems (1750–1756) reflects the prevailing literary conventions, those works dating from the onset of his monomania evolve from a very different source.

We have left Smart in the previous chapters as having quit the securities of a Cambridge fellowship and renounced the prestige attendant on the Seatonian awards, to plunge into the whirlpool of London publishing and theatrical enterprises. Here he remained, working with increasing agitation until his mental health eventually gave way under delusory religious apprehensions. The most notable manifestation of these beliefs, and that most pertinent to

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[1] Jubilate Agno, B2.621.

this study, was his preoccupation with David, the biblical Psalmist and Israelite king. Not only did David's close relationship with God arouse in the poet an admiration little short of idolatry, but in his minstrelsy Smart also perceived the express stamp of a man chosen by God and bearing His favour. It was the nature of Smart's illness to see himself also as Divinely ordained, in this case to reinterpret and re-present Scripture for the sanctification of eighteenth-century English society.

The origins of this pseudo-messianic delusion may be traced to the second Seatonian Prize Poem, the invocation of which combined the assurance of Divine appointment with snatches of the penitential psalms, which, self-directed, prefigure the manic obsessions of Jubilate Agno:

> ONCE more I dare to rouse the sounding string
> The Poet of my God - Awake my glory,
> Awake my lute and harp - my self shall wake. . . .[2]

Professing a genealogical descent from David and a mystical succession to his psalmody, Smart saw himself as herald to a new spiritual epoch, chosen to enlighten the nation. In this manner his intentions relinquished their primary stated purpose:

> Deeds, thoughts, and words no more his mandates break
> But to his endless glory work, conceive and speak.[3]

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2 On the Immensity of the Supreme Being (Cambridge, 1751), ll. 1-3. The fourth Seatonian poem refers to "th'anointed poet": On the Power of the Supreme Being (Cambridge, 1754), l. 1.

3 Hymn to the Supreme Being, On Recovery from a dangerous Fit of Illness (London, 1756), ll. 77-78.

and proclaimed, instead, the conviction of personal election: a certainty he never wholly abandoned. His particular vocation he professed to be the revivification of "ADORATION amongst ENGLISH-MEN" (Jubilate Agno, B2.332); to compose new anthems of praise, hallowed by God's benediction. The unfolding of this artistic certitude may be followed through the Jubilate fragments, in which Smart himself "appears as the singer of a new song unto the Lord, a sort of super-psalm with himself in the character of the new David, celebrant of the new Israel at the coming of the millenium" [sic]:[4]

> For I bless God . . . for the voice which he hath made sonorous.
> (B1. 80)
>
> For the blessing of God hath been on my epistles. . .
> (B1. 125)
>
> For the ENGLISH TONGUE shall be the language of the WEST.
> (B1. 127)
>
> . . . I am of the WORD of GOD.
> (B1. 195)
>
> For I am the Lord's News-Writer - the scribe-evangelist. . . .
> (B2. 327)

Smart's spurious claims to a theocratic and poetic authority are substantiated further by his crazed rehearsal of spiritual credentials, centring on putative assertions that would place him within the house and lineage of David:

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4 A.D. Hope, "The Apocalypse of Christopher Smart", in Studies in the Eighteenth Century, ed. R.F. Brissenden (Canberra, 1968), pp. 269-84 (p.272).

> For I give God the glory that I am a son of ABRAHAM a PRINCE of the house of my fathers.
> (Bl. 73)
>
> For I am enobled by my ascent and the Lord haith raised me above my Peers.
> (Bl. 86)
>
> For I am descended from the steward of the island blessed be the name of the Lord Jesus king of England.
> (Bl. 137)
>
> For I bless the Lord JESUS for his very seed, which is in my body.[5]
> (Bl. 144)

More than mere subject, David became the instrument through whom Smart's obsessive commitment to adoration could, with some decency, be properly channelled. In this manner he could vindicate his own enthusiasm by praising the enthusiasm of God's poet in the Psalms.

Although by August 1760 (the probable completion date of the B2 fragment) Smart's assumption of a Davidic persona and his adoption of the musician-king as a typological emblem for his own creativity were complete, there is evidence of an attraction to the Psalmist as early as 1746. In the "Preface" to his Ode for Musick on Saint Cecilia's Day Smart justified his rejection of David as a fit subject for the work since "The chusing too high subjects has been the ruin of many a tolerable Genius".[6] "Nevertheless", as Robert Brittain remarks, "the figure of David was already before his eyes; he had heard far off the echoes of that 'harp of high, majestic tone' which were

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[5] See also Jubilate Agno, Bl. 19, 62, 91; B2. 433, 435.

[6] Carmen Cl. Alexandri Pope in S. Caeciliam Latine Redditum [2nd ed.] . . . [with] an Ode for Musick on Saint Cecilia's Day (Cambridge, 1746), "Preface", [p.24].

destined to ring in his ears for the rest of his mortal life".[7]

Concomitant with Smart's veneration of David was an illusory yearning for the Davidic era when men "were ten feet high in general" (Jubilate Agno, C. 91), and when regenerate man "as yet had a glorious horn upon his forehead" (C. 119) that "brightend to the Glory of God" (C. 122). This nostalgic vision of a golden age representing perfect social symmetry bears close affinity with Smart's identification of David as a musician establishing harmony within his kingdom. The implication that poetry and music together, when rightly administered, could bring the human communal world into sympathy with the universal frame expressed an eighteenth-century postulatum implicit in much of its public poetry. Pope's Dunciad, for example, furnishes an explicit instance of poetry's power to regulate society. This dictum, in turn, derived most obviously from Plato's Republic, although it is clear that Smart also saw in David's minstrelsy a re-enactment of primal creative ordering. As one critic has noted, when he "rehearses the praise of dozens of Biblical characters in Fragment A, [of Jubilate Agno] only David's praise is equated with God's and the artist's".[8]

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7 Poems, p.66.

8 Jeanne Murray Walker, "'Jubilate Agno' as Psalm", Studies in English Literature 1500-1900, XX No. 3 (Summer 1980), 449-59 (p. 449).

Passages throughout Jubilate Agno, together with lines from A Song to David, indicate that Smart, in fact, eventually arrived at a bilateral conception of David which related both to the Creation myth and to the concept of universal harmony. On the one hand David is an emblematic participant, independent of time, in the events related in the first two chapters of Genesis. On the other, by virtue of his harp (which also functions symbolically as his poetry) he renews God's Original purpose.[9] Through his spiritual empathy, he "recreates" a consummate hymn of praise. And this is possible precisely because he also shared imaginatively in God's institutive Act. For Smart supported the concept of a "spiritual centre" that could be enlivened by the same agency, music, as was present at its formation. This spiritual core of the universe could be defined through music because it was created with music. And by way of this duality Smart institutes his own chain of adoration and praise, eulogizing David because of the Psalmist's ability to create poetry which adequately praises the creations of God. Smart's election of David as chief minister of praise reflected, in part, his unique place in creation's chain of being, and also underlined the spiritual unity of the universe which is the subject and inspiration of his hymns. In the Song this polarity of worship is expressed at the outset, for Smart hails David, who himself remains "Servant

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[9] The importance of the harp as an analogue for creativity is explored further in Chapter 6.

of God's holiest charge,/The minister of praise at large" (st. III). This lyric prayer directed to Israel's "sweet Psalmist" also records David's "perpetual prayer" (st. IX) to his Maker.[10]

These strands are brought together in line 41 of Fragment A of Jubilate Agno, by far the longest versicle in this division:

> Let David bless with the Bear - The beginning of victory to the Lord - to the Lord the perfection of excellence - Hallelujah from the heart of God, and from the hand of the artist inimitable, and from the echo of the heavenly harp in sweetness magnifical and mighty.

Smart's alliteration, the shout of praise and his cumulative energy all convey the poet's joy in his subject, as the argument simultaneously establishes a tripartite praise motif. Smart celebrates God's revealed excellence (His "heart"), David's unique responsory function (the "hand"), and the earth's song (the "echo" of the generic harp) resounding throughout the terrestrial plane. Through the harp Nature's voice is divined, just as by the harp her constitution was defined: "For EARTH which is an intelligence hath a voice and a propensity to speak in all her parts" (Jubilate Agno, Bl. 234). Creation's hymn forms the bond between God and His handiwork, interpreted through the "harp" of David. And the Psalmist's poesy has a special part to play, for "just as the old law of Moses is completed and subsumed in the New Testament of Christ the

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10 All quotations from the Song refer, by stanza number, to the second edition published in A Translation of the Psalms (1765), pp.185-94.

Redeemer, so natural adoration is completed and transcended by divine poetry. David represents the messianic and redemptive function of music and poetry and is therefore properly his ancestor in the flesh".[11]

In view of this progression towards the "Word made Flesh", it is not difficult to understand why Smart should also seek to incorporate the classical Orpheus into his eschatological scheme. For he delighted in singling out activities or phenomena which signalled either a faint foreshadowing, or a faint refraction, of the Divine Intelligence. And the Orphic legend fulfilled such criteria.[12] To Smart the Thracian demigod appeared as a peculiarly gifted figure; one able to discern the universal core of nature, and to draw all its filaments together into one chorus of praise. Through this marvel of attraction in the natural world was signified Orpheus's mystical empathy, to which pictorial representation was given by the traditional image of the god surrounded by animals and birds, attentive to his harmony. And Patrick Delany, in fact, placed this vignette directly alongside the Psalms of David, in which he saw "the whole creation particularly summoned in, to fill up the chorus of the divine

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11 Hope, pp.283-84.

12 Blaydes notes that both David and Orpheus "identified and responded to the order and harmony of God's creative love": Christopher Smart, p.171. The association is developed most fully in A Song to David.

praise".[13]

So Smart also, through the Grace of God and by implication of his own authority - "For Christ Jesus has exalted my voice to his own glory" (Jubilate Agno, C. 151) - saw himself as an annunciatory adjunct in the regenerative scheme.[14] His task he conceived of as twofold: firstly, because of his cognition of all levels of creation, election to speak for the diverse ranks of life and matter. A secondary and complementary role lay in "ordering" his art in such a manner as to reflect the Divine disposition; the almost fanatical structuring of the Song is, in part, a poetic enactment of cosmic gradation. In the same way David's outward command of order was analogized in his command of musical utterance, for both were God-infused, God-serving, activities. The second stanza of the Song indicates this relationship:

> To keep the days on Zion's mount,
> And send the year to his account,
> With dances and with songs. . . .

By regulating the Divine calendar through the artistry of movement, words and music (all methodical/rhythmical exercises), Smart returns a human response to his Creator.

Smart incorporated these two themes - creation's universal hymn of adoration and harmoniously-ordered activity

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13 An Historical Account of the Life and Reign of David, 2nd ed., 3 vols. (1740; London, 1740-42), I (1740), 198.

14 Smart's Christianization of the Psalms assumes greater significance in the light of this interpretation, for he is writing in anticipation of the New Jerusalem being established in England's green and pleasant land.

as worship - in various forms throughout his religious lyrics. Indeed, together they determine the conception of his Hymns and Psalms, which not only celebrate virtue, but in performance become a virtuous activity. Righteousness is itself praise of God, as to make melody to Him is to act virtuously:

> For ADORATION, DAVID's psalms
> Lift up the heart to deeds of alms;
> And he, who kneels and chants,
> Prevails his passions to controul,
> Finds meat and med'cine to the soul. . . .
> (A Song to David, st. LXIV)

In this sense the man who keeps God's appointed precepts (that is, His commandments) recreates primal melody; he "makes music" with Divine ordinances. For these laws not only define the social order, but were themselves instituted by the breath of God in humankind. Smart's "exercise upon the decalogue" (sts. XL-L) in which he summarizes the biblical moral code, concludes in an exhortation to PRAISE:

> . . . for praise prevails;
> Heap up the measure, load the scales,
> And good to goodness add. . . .
> (st. L)

He emphasizes not the prohibitory nature of God's decrees, but their inherent potency to reintegrate human nature into the Divine harmony. So he proclaims: "Glorious the song, when God's the theme" (st. LXXXV), for not only natural phenomena, but martyrdom, obedience to God's edicts, imprisonment for His sake, acclamation of His supremacy: all are eloquent

"songs" that redound to His glory.

Similarly, Smart's tabulation of seasons, animals and objects in the Song's "Adoration" stanzas recreates a terrestrial hymn of praise. And this method of enumerating the ranks of creation in fixed degree represents no empty display of ingenuity, but reinforces his conception of all rightly-regulated activity as musical adoration:

> For ADORATION seasons change,
> And order, truth, and beauty range,
> Adjust, attract, and fill. . . .
> (st. LII)

He interpreted all song, whether active or mute, as a spiritualizing agency. His ultimate design was to engage "the whole creation . . . in an antiphonal song of praise in answer to this divine creative music and in this way the fallen creation is gradually purified and restored. This is why David the psalmist is called 'The beginning of victory to the Lord'. The end of the world or the second coming of Christ will occur when all men join in this praise".[15] As Smart's interpretation of creation's hymn and of a "spiritual centre" forms an essential component of his theological and musical vision, it is necessary now to consider the origins and development of these ideas in more depth.

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15 Hope, p.280. Note Jubilate Agno, B2.344: "For God will descend in visible glory when men begin to applaud him".

There was, throughout the eighteenth century, a renewed consciousness of the spiritual potencies in the external world. Creation's predisposition towards active disclosure, apart from the obvious human powers of utterance, was most clearly seen in cosmic terms:

> The Spacious Firmament on high,
> With all the blue Etherial Sky,
> And spangled Heav'ns, a Shining Frame,
> Their great Original proclaim:
> Th'unwearied Sun, from day to day,
> Does his Creator's Pow'r display,
> And publishes to every Land
> The Work of an Almighty Hand.[16]

The most influential prose correlatives to Addison's poetic account were undoubtedly those of the renowned physico-theologian John Ray. Smart was almost certainly familiar with The Wisdom of God which restated Addison's assertion by declaring that the "vast multitude of Creatures . . . The Sun and Moon, and all the Heavenly Hosts are Effects and Proofs of his Almighty Power".[17] Although works by Ray and William Derham in current usage at Cambridge around 1730 may have provided the impetus for Smart's absorption of physico-theological thought,[18] it was David, who first perceiving

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16 [Joseph Addison], The Spectator, No.465, 23 August 1712, fol.^{v}.

17 The Wisdom of God Manifested in the Works of the Creation, 4th ed. (1691; London, 1704), "The Preface", sigs. A6^{v} - A7^{r}. Note also W.[illiam] Derham, Astro-Theology (London, 1715).

18 See, for example, John Ray, Three Physico-Theological Discourses (London, 1692). W.[illiam] Derham in Physico-Theology, 3rd ed. (1713; London, 1714), concludes that "the Works of GOD are . . . visible to all the World, and . . . manifest Indications of the Being and Attributes of the infinite Creator" (p.431). See also Appendix C, in Sherbo, Christopher Smart, pp. 273-77.

God through terrestrial works, gathered all creation into one hymn of praise. This same all-embracing vision pervades Smart's religious poems as he evolved a harmony of earthly forces to mirror the perfect harmony of heaven.

The distinction between description and revelation, though, is a vital one, and turns on the poet's conception of nature. A Genesis-like view certainly prevails in the first Seatonian poems, for here Smart's response to the "baroque" vistas is to dispose them as a visionary landscape, surveyed by a masterhand. On the Goodness, however, marks its gradual transformation into one of Smart's most characteristic dogmas: that the exercise of nature in functional display, passive unfolding or yet mere existence, is itself an act of adoration, since these varied attributes directly reveal and illuminate the Divine Maker. Ray had written that "The Wisdom, Art, and Power of Almighty God, shines forth visibly in the Structure of the Body of the minutest Insect, as in that of a Horse or Elephant: Therefore God is said to be, Maximum in minimis". He also remarked that "senceless and inanimate Things" could not of their own volition honour God; they only afforded "Matter or Subject of praising him, to rational and intelligent Beings".[19] But Smart's doctrine embraced praise rising spontaneously from natural and inert objects as well as from reasoning man. His sacramental interpretation of Being recognized joyful

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19 Wisdom of God, Part One, pp.202, 200.

display as the endowment of all created matter; indeed, he even dismissed the centrality of man's sensory perception as a necessary element. Within the genus of natural objects, for instance, some birds "make music" while others "mock". Yet both the untamed and the domestic, those in whose music man naturally delights, and those that merely exert their vocal capabilities, "Enrich the thankful psalm" (A Song to David, sts. XXII, XXIII).

Praise, then, is not only the considered response of rational man, for, as the world is a living system, so all existence signals its origin through unconstrained activity. Nor are inanimate objects excluded, for in the Song one of Smart's loveliest images describes the precious topaz deep within the earth "glowing in its unmined glory with praise of God".[20] Through his peculiar insight Smart was enabled to distil the quintessential "thisness" of each substantive element. As God sustains all matter, and because all creatures live equally to His charge, so the mention of all flows back to His praise.[21] By emphasizing the capaciousness of praise, Smart recognizes in creation's plenitude a varied set of responses. Yet unity exists within apparent opposition, for though the world be multifarious, it is an "orchestral"

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20 Blaydes, p.140.

21 Leonard Whibley speaks of Smart's "glorification of nature as declaring the adoration of the Divine": "The Jubilee at Pembroke Hall in 1743", Blackwood's Magazine, CCXXI (January 1927), 104-15 (p.115).

universe in which each being or spirit, material or immaterial, adds its characteristic note: these are not isolated voices raised to God, but in their diversity, wholeness and order convey the song of creation, which, in turn, best reflects the Divine beauty and bounty.

Of all creatures, though, man has, in this symphony of nature, a distinctive part to play; it is for him, first of all, to enliven the song with his immortal voice. For wherever music was valued, the highest place was accorded vocal (as opposed to instrumental) art, since God could be honoured through choral praise; and many considered this to be music's most important function. To this purpose man had been endowed with an intellect most akin to the Divine, and a faculty of utterance with which to praise Him. "The very Power of Singing", wrote Isaac Watts, "was given to human Nature chiefly for this purpose, that our warmest Affections of Soul might break out into natural or divine Melody, and the Tongue of the Worshipper express his own Heart".[22] In tuning "all the powers of . . . [man's] soul to worship and adoration", hymnody was "as much the true support and exercise of this spirit of thanksgiving, as Prayer is the true support and exercise of the spirit of devotion . . . as much the natural language of praise and thanksgiving, as Prayer

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22 The Psalms of David Imitated in the Language of the New Testament, and apply'd to the Christian State and Worship (London, 1719), p.xii.

is the natural language of devotion".[23] Mortals might approach the Infinite through prayer and praise, and Smart's religious verse is a means of sharing in that centrality of worship due to the Creator.[24] In his eyes, the tribute of song, arising spontaneously through the human agent, enabled man to enter into a direct mystical bond. When ordered by God, and reflecting His Divine truth, its force was boundless, "Connecting earth with heav'n above", as he expressed it in a psalm paraphrase (Psalm CXLV, l.35).[25] "For M is musick and therefore he is God", he wrote in Jubilate Agno (C.5), since music had become, for him, the most compelling form of praise, and its object, to reveal the omnipresence of God. Conscious or unconscious affirmation of the Divine though any medium became as music, be it active worship (angelic symphonies and human art) or passive intimation (cosmic ordering and terrestrial functionality).

In opposition to Locke's theory of the mind as a tabula rasa, Smart conceived of the human soul with its faculties of intellect and charity, as the image of its Creator. Mankind, together with the whole chain of being, was stamped with God's

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23 William Law, A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life, 4th ed. (1728; London, 1739), pp.188, 194. Smart was acquainted with Law's mystical writings which included The Spirit of Prayer (1749).

24 Compare Donne: [prayer and praise] "accompany one another . . . they meet like two waters, and make the streame of devotion the fuller" — [Sermon No.14], in The Sermons of John Donne, ed. George R. Potter and Evelyn M. Simpson, 10 vols. (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1953-62), V (1959), 268-95. Note Smart: "For the method of philosophizing is in a posture of Adoration" (Jubilate Agno, B1.268).

25 All quotations are from A Translation of the Psalms of David (London, 1765).

likeness, and only awaited that infused insight which alone could restore its innate unity. Believing himself possessed of such consciousness, Smart placed his creativity in direct line with that of David: of all humankind most closely connected with the Divine plan. He also professed to show the spiritual energies contained in all movement, all rhythm, all sound: "For the PERPETUAL MOTION is in all the works of Almighty GOD" (Jubilate Agno, B1.186).[26] Every manifestation of the four elements possessed this force which was only made visible when its sacred origin was revealed. The formularies of Jubilate Agno, which are central to an understanding and interpretation of A Song to David, also convey the reasoning behind this quest: namely, Smart's attempts to replace a materialist universe with a spiritual and animistic cosmology. Many of the Jubilate fragments, moreover, underline the poet's concern to uncover a mystical language that would express the unity of the cosmos as he perceived it.

The animist system that Smart developed asserted that the earth itself, all life-sustaining forces, sublunary phenomena and mundane entities have an orientation towards Divine praise. His exposition of this principle derived considerably from works on Covenant theology, millennium theory and physiography in circulation at Cambridge in the 1740s,[27] and the resulting

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26 See also B1.271, 226, 234-35, 253-58.

27 Note, for instance, Jo.[seph] Keill, An Examination of Dr. Burnet's Theory of the Earth (Oxford, 1698), and William Whiston, A New Theory of the Earth (London, 1696).

ideology characteristically combined components of all three subjects. Although Smart's reading and subsequent utilization of sources is demonstrably eclectic, passages from Rich.[ard] Burthogge's Of the Soul of the World, in particular, correspond to certain Jubilate sections. Smart's system was dominated by his belief in the unitive proposition that "nothing is so real as that which is spiritual" (Jubilate Agno, Bl.258).[28] And Burthogge had also written that "the Mosaical Spirit (called Gen. I.V.2. the Spirit of God) being a Spirit of Life, and present every where, in all the Parts of the Universe, is the Original of all the Energy, Motion, and Action therein".[29]

The union of God's creative Spirit (His Breath of Life) and spiritus mundi (everywhere present) is through His logos or generative "Word". Smart's image of God as Primal Artist equates with his conception of the Supreme Musician:

> For GOD the father Almighty plays upon the HARP of stupendous magnitude and melody.
>
> For innumerable Angels fly out at every touch and his tune is a work of creation.
>
> For this time is perceptible to man by a remarkable stillness and serenity of soul.
>
> (Jubilate Agno, Bl.246, 247, 249)[30]

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28 Note also, "For the Centre is the hold of the Spirit upon the matter in hand": Jubilate Agno, Bl.184.

29 Of the Soul of the World; and of Particular Souls (London, 1699), p.6; note also: "the Body lives not, if it be not animated with some Portion of the Mosaical Spirit" (p.8).

30 Note also Bl.254; C.5, 55. For further consideration of this passage, see Appendix I.

God's "HARP" signifies His formation of the world - harmony mirrored in harmony - and also represents perfect (musical) symmetry and the concord of form and ethos. As Smart expressed this idea a few years later: "His wisdom drew the plan;/His WORD accomplish'd the design" (A Song to David, st. XXX).[31] All the various threads of creation share the same informing spirit, which defines their sympathetic co-existence.

Coincidental to Smart's conviction of the spiritual constitution of the universe according to harmonious musical stasis, is his treatment of "music of the spheres", the ordering of planets in their ratios, which, when moving in concert, chimed in sounds inaudible to human ears. Although attributed to Pythagoras, reiterated by Plutarch, Plotinus, Cicero, Plato, Quintilianus, Pliny and others, and formalized as musica mundana according to Boethius's classification in De Institutione Musica, this ancient concept also shared a biblical source. The prophet Job relates how "the morning stars sang together" (Job 38.7),[32] and Isaiah enjoins, "Sing, O heavens . . . and break forth into singing, O mountains" (Isaiah 49.13). Augustine and Thomas Aquinas among Christian writers adapted this teaching, and it was endorsed, surprisingly,

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31 Compare Genesis 1.2: "And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters". Smart also alluded to "God's harp" in Jubilate Agno, B2.524.

32 Compare, "Before 'the Morning-Stars together sang'/And hail'd Thee Architect of countless worlds": On the Eternity of the Supreme Being (Cambridge, 1750), ll. 26-27.

by the astronomer Johannes Kepler in his Harmonices Mundi (1619). Thus established, it provided a basis for imagery from medieval to late-eighteenth century poetry. Chaucer, Sylvester, Spenser and Shakespeare employed it, numerous St. Cecilia odes extolled it, and from the many poetic embodiments, that of Milton was in all likelihood the most familiar to Smart.[33]

The speculative aura remained long after the literal interpretation had been discredited, for, as John Hollander notes, writers "could employ the figurative notion of harmonia mundi, embellishing the abstract idea with all sorts of . . . musical correspondences, drawn either from the bits of Classical theory transmitted by Boethius or from the musical theory of their own day".[34] Consequently Hawkins, as late as 1776, redefined the old concept in the light of contemporary science.[35] But such instances were rare, for as with the Orpheus myth, musica mundana remained one of a number of acknowledged classical "props", significant not

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33 See On the Morning of Christ's Nativity, sts. IX-XIV; "At a Solemn Musick"; Arcades, ll. 61-73; and Prolusion II, De Sphaerarum Concentu (On the Music of the Spheres).

34 The Untuning of the Sky (Princeton, 1961), p.46.

35 General History, I, 172-78; IV, 168-72. See Lawrence Lipking, The Ordering of the Arts (Princeton, 1970), pp.256-63.

as putative fact, but as evoking an array of complex imagistic associations.[36]

Smart's paraphrase of Psalm 19 is one of his religious pieces which incorporates the concept of planetary harmony. Here he extols the Divine Presence through the super-sensible experience of heavenly music, audible to the spiritually-attuned ear. Some one hundred years earlier Sir Thomas Browne had developed the same thesis: "For there is a musick where ever there is a harmony, order or proportion; and thus far we may maintain the musick of the sphears: for those well ordered motions, and regular paces, though they give no sound unto the ear, yet to the understanding they strike a note most full of harmony".[37] This super-natural music not only echoes through "all the clust'ring spheres", but is also embodied in spatial existence, resounding in the corporeal element of earth. By chiming "O'er spacious nature" as Smart expressed it (Psalm XIX, l.20), the terrestrial shows itself to be 'sounded through' by the celestial. In Psalm CXLVIII Smart again employs the

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36 See Julius Portnoy, The Philosopher and Music (New York, 1954); Gretchen Ludke Finney, Musical Backgrounds for English Literature (1962; rpt. Connecticut, 1976), passim; Leo Spitzer, Classical and Christian Ideas of World Harmony, ed. Anna Granville Hatcher (Baltimore, 1963); Hollander, pp.20-51; Sigmund Gottfried Spaeth, Milton's Knowledge of Music (Princeton, 1913), pp.69-75, and Appendix V, Sec. D, "Concerning the Music of the Spheres", pp. 144-48.

37 Religio Medici, 5th ed., With Observations by Sir Kenelm Digby (1642; London, 1659), p.155.

notion of sentient heavens, whose harmonious praise mirrors God's perfect concord:

> Praise him ye heav'ns above
> The highest heav'n sublime,
> Where tun'd to truth and love
> The spheres symphonious chime . . .
> (ll. 19-22)

Smart's elaboration in a hymn ascribed to worship is far from incongruous, since the whole universe from highest to lowest ranks is set in symphonious motion. The circling planets reflect their Divine origin by acting out a Divine function. And they find their semblance on earth, for, as Philo wrote: "it seems, then, that the heaven, the original archetype of all musical instruments, was tuned with consummate skill for no other purpose than that the hymns sung in honour of the Universal Father may have a musical accompaniment".[38]

As with macrocosmic order — universal, planetary harmony — so also its microcosmic reflection in man: his outward, physical being and his inner constitution. Both unities were governed by, and answered to, the analogy of music. Concerning the latter, musica humana taught that the soul was endowed with its own music, corresponding to, and activated by, emotional stimuli. Aristotle articulated it thus: there "seems to be in us a sort of affinity to harmonies and rhythms, which makes some philosophers say

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38 On Dreams (De Somniis), I.vi.37, in Philo, trans. F.H. Colson and Rev. G.H. Whitaker, Loeb Classical Library, 10 vols. (London, 1929-62), V (1934), 315.

that the soul is a harmony, others, that she possesses harmony". But this harmony could not be maintained in perfect equipoise, formed and nourished as it was by conflicting passions: "Rhythm and melody supply imitations of anger and gentleness, and also of courage and temperance and of virtues and vices in general, which hardly fall short of the actual affections, as we know from our own experience, for in listening to such strains our souls undergo a change".[39] From Aristotelian catharsis, so defined, arose the speculative concept of "music and the passions", perhaps the single most significant musico-philosophical theory in English literature. As reflected in the doctrine of ethos and further developed by Hellenic and Roman philosophers,[40] music's effect on the soul was also revived in Neo-Platonism.[41] And accompanying the rationalization of classical and Christian ideas on harmony which became a seventeenth- and eighteenth-century preoccupation, it re-emerged in scarcely differentiated decorative garb in each new St. Cecilia ode.

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39 Aristotle's Politics, trans. Benjamin Jowett (Oxford, 1905), pp.311, 309. Compare Browne, Religio Medici: "the soul is . . . harmonicall, and hath its nearest sympathy unto musick" (p.156). See Thomas Twining, Two Dissertations, in Aristotle, Treatise on Poetry, trans. Thomas Twining (London, 1789), pp.3-61.

40 Aristides Quintilianus in De Musica, Libri III provided a compendium of classical thought, and devoted most of Book II to a consideration of music's power over the soul: see Antiquae Musicae Auctores Septem, comp. Marcus Meibomius, 2 vols. (Amsterdam, 1652), II, 59-111.

41 Some Christian and civil implications are discussed in Charls [sic] Butler, The Principles of Musik (London, 1636).

Notwithstanding the predominantly ascetic rationalism of early Christian writers on music, and the scientific rationalism of post-Renaissance philosophers, many classical ideas became firmly established within orthodox tradition.[42] Their aura, if not their literality, continued to permeate poetry written throughout the 1700s; associations that were strengthened by the undiminished vogue for "Odes to Music". When the relationship of theology to music was reconsidered during the eighteenth century, musical harmony was seen as "nothing less than a counterpart to universal harmony as reflected in the human soul, which through fervour and ecstasy achieves its own ennoblement".[43] For if theorists concluded that "just proportion" existed in both earthly and heavenly spheres since nature (in its widest sense) was governed by Divine harmony, they were, in effect, restating classical philosophies.

According to Pythagoras, as the soul was "attuned" to regularity it naturally (that is, by nature) responded to music which was, itself, uniform. And such music reflected heavenly concord. Again, Clement of Alexandria disclosed the Divine force which "composed the entire creation into melodious order, and tuned into concert the discord of

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42 See The Early Christian View of Music, in Source Readings in Music History, ed. Oliver Strunk (London, 1952), pp.59-75.

43 Herbert M. Schueller, "The Use and Decorum of Music as Described in British Literature, 1700-1780", JHI, XIII (January 1952), 73-93 (p.76).

the elements, that the whole universe might be in harmony with it. . . . By the power of the Holy Spirit he arranged in harmonious order this great world, yes, and the little world of man too, body and soul together; and on this many-voiced instrument of the universe He makes music".[44] By 1600 some writers could claim music to be "the Noblest of all Sciences: for the whole frame of Nature, is nothing but Harmonie, as wel in soules, as bodies",[45] and treating the century in toto, Gretchen L. Finney concludes that "the music of the spheres, the harmony of astronomical relationships and motions, the numerical order of mathematics, the just governing of people, the perfection of love, the balance of elements in man's body, the peace of his soul, the balance of reason, the consonance of musical sound - all proportion, all number - are manifestation of the same divine force".[46]

Smart did not stand outside his age in assimilation of these concepts as the argument of his first published English poem (Ode for Musick on Saint Cecilia's Day) plainly indicates. Moreover, the affinities between religion, nature and literature form, in his case, a complex but not enigmatic pattern, particularly when set against contemporary

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44 The Exhortation to the Greeks, trans. G.W. Butterworth, Loeb Classical Library (London, 1919), pp.11, 13.

45 John Dowland, "Epistolary Dedication" to The Second Booke of Songs or Ayres, ed. Diana Poulton (1600; facsimile rpt. Menston, Yorks.: Scolar Press, 1970), sig.A2^{v}; Vol. IV No. 16 of English Lute Songs 1597-1632: A Collection of Facsimile Reprints, gen. ed. F.W. Sternfeld (Menston, Yorks.: Scolar Press).

46 "Ecstasy and Music in Seventeenth-Century England", JHI, VIII No. 2 (April 1947), 153-86 (p.156); see also Herbert M. Schueller, "Correspondences Between Music and the Sister Arts", The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism, XI (June 1953), 334-59.

religio-philosophic trends.

As we have seen, Smart's credo was a sensory, demonstrably Davidic, partisanship. Such a philosophy contrasted strongly with the growing secularization of the period (developing from the seventeenth-century writings of Bacon and those of the arch-empiricist Hobbes); with its rationalism (seen in the emergence of Deism), and its mechanism (generally attributable to the Newtonian world-view). In expression, moreover, it disclaimed that moderation and ease which characterized pulpit oratory - "Common quiet is Mankind's concern".[47] Smart's delight in the mundane world reflected that of Shaftesbury, who, in the midst of restrained meditation could write:

> 'O GLORIOUS nature! supremely Fair, and sovereignly Good! All-loving and All-lovely, All-divine! Whose Looks are so becoming, and of such infinite Grace; whose Study brings such Wisdom, and whose Contemplation such Delight; whose every single Work affords an ampler Scene, and is a nobler Spectacle than all that ever Art presented! - O mighty Nature! Wise Substitute of Providence! impower'd Creatress! Or thou impowering DEITY, Supreme Creator! Thee I invoke, and Thee alone adore.'[48]

The Shaftesburian sense of God's immanence which imbues

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47 Religio Laici, l.450, in The Poems and Fables of John Dryden, ed. James Kinsley (London, 1962).

48 The Moralists, A Philosophical Rhapsody (1709), in Characteristicks of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times, 3 vols. ([London], 1711), II, 345.

Smart's religious poetry is compounded by ancillary convictions: a delineation of His unassailable mastery, and the joyful instinctivity with which creation returns its thanks and praise.

Although these beliefs, in themselves, denote a quite orthodox theological position, they were accompanied by other, wildly heterodox notions, discussed in the opening pages of this chapter. The tension between these irreconcilable persuasions — on the one hand Smart's confession of the Divine Presence; on the other, his messianic delusions — eventually proved overwhelming. As his thinking became increasingly zealous and distracted, so his behaviour assumed increasingly bizarre forms:

> For I have adventured myself in the name of
> the Lord, and he hath mark'd me for his own.
> (Jubilate Agno, B1.21)

> For the ceiling of the house is an obstacle
> and therefore we pray on the house-top.
> (C.136)

> For to worship naked in the Rain is the bravest
> thing for the refreshing & purifying the body.
> (B2.384)

To eighteenth-century society at large, only one explanation for this condition was possible. Smart had fallen victim to enthusiasm: that most feared, because least understood, of religious psychoses.

In stark contrast to Latitudinarian sang-froid, enthusiasm consisted in "pretending to receive the Articles of Faith by

extraordinary Illumination, and in irrational and extravagant actions of Devotion and Piety, which a fond Imagination mistaketh for the Impulses and Dictates of the Divine Spirit".[49] Those who had "let loose their Fansies, and natural Superstition", and by them, been led into "strange Opinions, and extravagant Practices in Religion",[50] to them, in vain, was the cold compress of sobriety applied.[51] Indeed, "when rightly understood", enthusiasm was "fatal to Christianity, and destructive to the Reason of mankind",[52] its consequences so apparent as hardly to require substantiation: "And what Pestilential Influences the Genius of Enthusiasme or opinionative Zeal has upon the Publick Peace, is so

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49 [Henry Wharton], The Enthusiasm of the Church of Rome (London, 1688), "The Preface", sig. A4^{r}; note also [Richard Kingston], Enthusiastick Impostors No Divinely Inspir'd Prophets (London, 1707): a cautionary casebook of fanatical religious behaviour.

50 John Locke, An Essay Concerning Humane Understanding (London, 1690), p.352; note also The Reasonableness of Christianity (London, 1695), in which Locke sought to demonstrate "by an attentive and unbiassed search" the "Satisfaction and Consistency" of Scripture (sig. A2^{r}).

51 See Locke, Essay, p.357. Note Shaftesbury, "A Letter Concerning Enthusiasm" (1708), in Characteristicks, I, 3–55.

52 [Wharton], "The Preface", sig. A3^{v}. The "destruction" of Christianity was generally attributed to Papists; that of reason to "fanatics", notably Whitefield, Wesley and their followers.

evident from Experience, that it needs not be proved from Reason".[53]

Smart's religious ardour, bound up with his poetic inspiration, was unquestionably anathema to eighteenth-century advocates of the via media. For to "the generall and perpetuall voyce of men" as Richard Hooker defined it,[54] any personal revelations by professed enthusiasts were suspect, as contrary to the ascendant deistic rationale founded on uniformity of thought and utterance. The objectivism of the majority — consensus gentium — was the mid-century poetic and religious touchstone; subjectivism of the individual in respect of behaviour and aesthetics bore little relationship to a neoclassical philosophy which declared that "a law . . . generally taken, is a directive rule unto goodnes of operation".[55] Restraint not impetuosity; a reasoning rather than an inspirational basis for discourse and poetics: these

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53 Sam.[uel] Parker, A Free and Impartial Censure of the Platonick Philosophie (Oxford, 1666), p.73. An account of the Restoration background is given in K.M.P. Burton, Restoration Literature (London, 1958), pp.18-24, 149-80. Note also R.A. Knox, Enthusiasm (Oxford, 1950); Sister M. Kevin Whelan, Enthusiasm in English Poetry of the Eighteenth Century (1700-1774) (Washington, 1935); Kenneth MacLean, John Locke and English Literature of the Eighteenth Century (New Haven, 1936), pp.154-60; J.E.V. Crofts, "Enthusiasm", in Eighteenth Century Literature (Oxford, 1909), pp.127-50.

54 Of the Laws of Ecclesiasticall Politie. Eyght Bookes (London, [1594-]97), Book One, Sec. VIII, p.63.

55 Hooker, loc. cit.

assumptions defined the prevailing literary milieu, and were paralleled by a theological climate in which naturalism, universality and decorum were among its primary characteristics. Indeed, the "neo-classic antipathy to originality and to private intuitions in matters of taste . . . was analogous to the deist's usual antipathy to 'enthusiasm'".[56] But such avidity of conduct, religion and literary procedure was always for Smart, a necessary corollary to praise. "Use all thy passions!" he was to cry in A Song to David, including "rapture to transport" (st. XLIV), for wholehearted adoration presupposed wholehearted commitment; that is, exercise of all God-given faculties and virtues.

By way of conclusion, and before embarking upon a reading of Smart's later religious works, it may be well to recapitulate three aspects of his art which assume a prominent place in subsequent discussions. Smart clearly saw nature as the veiled expression of the Divine; the outward and visible disclosing the unseen and spiritual. In this he acknowledged God's existence both in and above creation. But no longer content with a moralized interpretation of natural phenomena as revelations of a stupendous Deity, Smart turned increasingly to view the glories inherent in man and nature as a personal incentive and dictate to (musical) praise.

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56 Arthur O. Lovejoy, "The Parallel of Deism and Classicism", MP, XXIX No. 3 (February 1932), 281-99 (p.296).

Secondly, a radical change in sensibility demanded a corresponding change in idiom; the heroic couplet which condensed imaginative flights into a circumscribed mould was no longer an adequate formal vehicle. Although Smart was not to abandon the couplet entirely— it surfaced in his translation of the Parables (1768) — both this and Miltonic blank verse were to appear increasingly at odds with his transformed, idiosyncratic vision. Moreover, during his confinement he had experimented both with the sound-quality of words and with their disposition and grammatical structure:

> For there are more letters in all languages not communicated.
>
> For there are some that have the power of sentences.
>
> (Jubilate Agno, C.40, 41)[57]

Together with his assimilation of techniques observed in Horatian poetry, this experimentation was to give rise to verse which mirrored, in part, the profundity and intensity of his religious perception, and which was received with predictable dismay by a society whose curbs and precepts it so manifestly violated.

Lastly, from the end of the seventeenth century onwards, many theorists, among them Locke and Chesterfield, came to

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57 See also B2. 597-602. One hundred years later Hopkins, in his Early Diaries of 1863 and 1864, was also to list words by sound and sense: see The Journals and Papers of Gerard Manley Hopkins, ed. Humphry House and Graham Storey (London, 1959), pp. 4, 5, 7 et passim.

view music less highly than did their predecessors. Although some aestheticians tried to show that music was amenable to Reason and the reasoning man, this was not accepted by others who regarded it as an irrational art and the product of a suspect imagination. Naturally enough, it was these irrational and inspirational roots that restored music to its former pinnacle in nineteenth-century thought. In the case of Smart, a reading of Jubilate Agno, together with his post-asylum pieces, reveals a radically renewed consciousness of the possibilities inherent in musical typology. One need only quote a characteristic Smartian apophthegm from Jubilate Agno to appreciate the extent of this transmutation: "For stuff'd guts make no musick; strain them strong and you shall have sweet melody" (B2. 307). The importance that Smart attached to the use of musical imagery and to the musical disposition of verse, however, was not calculated to impress those who questioned, in any case, the whole basis of musical discourse and practice. In subsequent chapters Smart's religious poetry will be examined in relation to these subjects, and more specifically, as it reflects his assimilation of musical language and methodology.

CHAPTER SIX A SONG TO DAVID

> DAVID, there is no death for thee,
> Thy name is immortality,
> And thou wert born to live.[1]

The "List of Books publish'd in April and May" as compiled by The Gentleman's Magazine for May 1763 contained the following entry: "A song to David, by Chr. Smart, A.M. 1s Fletcher".[2] The work thus recorded, to be sold not only by Mr. Fletcher in St. Paul's Church-Yard, but, more confidently, "by all the BOOKSELLERS in Town and Country",[3] appeared some three months after the author's second release from confinement, on 8 April 1763. To the reading public at large, this issue seemed but one further inconsequential ingress into a literary era inundated with rhymed quarto compositions, printed on behalf of their authors. Smart, however, had prefaced the Song with a quotation from II Samuel 23.1, 2 — "The SPIRIT OF THE LORD spake by ME, and HIS WORD was in my TONGUE" — by which inscription he claimed, as emissary of God, a direct inheritance of the Psalmist's harp.

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1 Psalm CXVIII, ll.97-99, in Christopher Smart, A Translation of the Psalms of David (London, 1765).

2 The Gentleman's Magazine, XXXIII (May 1763), 259.

3 A Song to David (London, 1763) [title page].

As has been suggested in Chapter Four, Smart's adoption of David as typological emblem for his own religious poetics was all but complete by 1760. In this respect A Song to David may rightly be seen as an encomium on the Psalmist as well as a hymn or "high ode" of praise to God. But in avowing David's essential holiness, Smart's poem also objectified his personal stance in the contemporary controversy surrounding "the Man after God's Own Heart". As the appearance of the Song and Smart's concern within it to eulogize the character and conduct of his hero are closely bound up with the Davidian embroilment of the early 1760s, some account of these events is clearly desirable.

Although numerous "lives" of David had appeared throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, arousing no particular antipathies,[4] the publication, in 1697, of Pierre Bayle's Dictionary signalled a radical departure from the neutrality of earlier critical biographies. In his notorious article concerning David,[5] Bayle chose to

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4 See, for instance, Fredericus Rhodius, David Rex et Propheta (Erfurt, 1590); Hieremias Drexelius, David Regius Psaltes Descriptus et Morali Doctrina (Munich, 1643); [Adam Ebert], Ratio Status Davidis Judaeorum Regis, in Quinquaginta Relationes ex Parnasso de Variis Europae Eventibus (Hamburg, 1683), pp.321-76; Everardus Haverkamp, Oratio, qua Davidis Res Gestae (Leyden, 1735). Note also Davideis, [1656] in The Works of Mr Abraham Cowley (London, 1668); and Thomas Ellwood, Davideis. The Life of David (London, 1712).

5 A General Dictionary, Historical and Critical, [trans.] 10 vols. (London, 1734-41), IV (1736), 532-43.

emphasize the monarch's moral imperfections, and in so doing, laid the foundations of dissension for the next six decades. A very different estimation of David's character was that promoted by Patrick Delany, who, some forty years later, aimed to repudiate Bayle's objections in a blaze of rhetoric:

> To sum up all; A true believer, and zealous adorer, of GOD; teacher of his law and worship, and inspirer of his praise! A glorious example, a perpetual and inexhaustible fountain, of true piety! A consummate and unequalled hero, a skilful and a fortunate captain! A steady patriot, a wise ruler, a faithful, a generous, and a magnanimous friend! And, what is yet rarer, a no less generous and magnanimous enemy! A true penitent, a divine musician, a sublime poet, and an inspired prophet! By birth a peasant, by merit a prince! In youth, a hero; in manhood, a monarch; in age, a saint![6]

Notwithstanding the indisputable evidence of Smart's acquaintance with Delany's volumes, a more immediate impetus to his Davidic partisanship lay in the conflict re-initiated by Samuel Chandler in 1760. In this year Chandler delivered a fulsome sermon on the death of George II in which he drew parallels between the late monarch's qualities and those pertaining to the Israelite king. His vaporous claims provoked a prompt retort by way of the anonymously published History of the Man after God's Own Heart, in which the author purported to offer a "fair undisguised narrative of the life and transactions of David king of Israel".[7] Attack was

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6 An Historical Account of the Life and Reign of David, 2nd ed., 3 vols.(1740; London, 1740-42), III (1742), 358. See also [François Timoléon de Choisy], The History of the Life and Death of David (London, 1741).

7 [John Noorthouck], The History of the Man after God's Own Heart, 2nd ed. (1761; London, 1766), "Preface", p.xiii.

parried by counter-attack, as Chandler, supported by his fellow prelates, replied with a carefully argued three-hundred-page vindication of David's disposition and conduct.[8] After yet more schism, Chandler's coup de grâce, A Critical History of the Life of David, appeared to signal a close to further contention.[9] Appearing then, in the hub of this debate, A Song to David may be considered as Smart's timely exoneration of his hero, for in adopting the phrase "The man of God's own choice",[10] he stated his own position quite unequivocally.

But clearly Smart's poem also embodied his personal preoccupation with enthusiasm: that most reprehensible of Augustan religious malaises. Not only did its practitioners affront society's public observances, but any literary work tainted by its influence could only incur suspicion, especially when set against the prevailing rationale of moderation and order. It was expected that all serious poetry should reflect an intellect defined by logical discourse, and should possess a structure encompassing logical argument. If Smart could fulfil the latter sine qua non in his rigidly-disposed

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8 A Review of the History of the Man after God's Own Heart (London, 1762). Note also Beilby Porteus, The Character of David King of Israel Impartially Stated (Cambridge, 1761); William Cleaver, An Inquiry into the true Character of David (Oxford, [1762]); and John Francis, Reflections on the Moral and Religious Characters of David (London, 1764).

9 A Critical History, 2 vols. (London, 1766). On this particular controversy see Sherbo, Christopher Smart, Scholar, pp. 172-74.

10 A Song to David, st. V; all quotations from the Song refer, by stanza number, to the second edition published in A Translation of the Psalms (1765), pp.185-94.

"List of Contents", any appeal to the former condition was effectively consigned to fancy by his biographical circumstances. He was naturally aware of the requirements of precedence, propriety and correctitude, and anticipated, and responded to, these demands by prefixing the Song with a methodical (though inaccurate) synopsis, and by citing the "EXACT REGULARITY" of its construction. In this he was consciously, indeed desperately, asserting orderliness on a structural level when, organically, any such claim would have proved of little avail. But the decidedly subdued reception given his masterpiece was directly due to two related factors: firstly, the ipso facto assumption that a deranged mind could only generate poetry of the same order; and secondly, the startling imagistic juxtapositions present in the poem which only reinforced such a view.

It seems likely that Smart, whose mind was habitually occupied with biblical imagery, wrote the bulk of A Song to David in the aftermath of an exalted religious megalomania that left his imagination uncommonly stimulated and his sense of artistic discrimination barely intact. As Edmund Gosse surmizes: "There is just enough distraction left to break down the barrier of 'good taste', to induce a recklessness of speech, an abandonment to emotion, which were foreign to the discipline of that age and an outrage against the canons of composition".[11] That mode of conduct which Augustan

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[11] Leaves and Fruit (London, 1927), p.10.

conventionality dismissed as fanaticism had become, for Smart, a joyous and logical ideology and the impetus to creativity. But to a reading audience who regarded "Fancy or Imagination as a sort of poetical emanation that flickered upon the surface of a poem",[12] the Song's intoxicating rush and flow of images, its urgency and transitional freedom proclaimed that "intellect" (as a rigorous controlling device) was manifestly subservient to "feeling". Suggestiveness seemed to have replaced intellectual discipline: what Dr. Johnson approvingly described as the methodology of procedure expected of an eighteenth-century lyricist.[13] The poem conformed to no acknowledged status quo; its passionate abruptness flouted the rigid control and orderly progression displayed in models of the genre. Little wonder, then, that contrasting so markedly with the discursive poise of the orthodox lyric form, A Song to David should have engendered almost unanimous critical hostility.

. The first private intimation of its worth came from the pen of William Mason, who wrote to Thomas Gray in June 1763: "I have seen his [Smart's] Song to David & from thence conclude him as mad as ever".[14] This dismissive judgment was qualified

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12 James Sutherland, A Preface to Eighteenth Century Poetry (Oxford, 1948), p.163.

13 See The Lives of the Most Eminent English Poets, 4 vols. (London, 1781), II, 179.

14 Correspondence of Thomas Gray, ed. Paget Toynbee and Leonard Whibley, 3 vols. (Oxford, 1935), II, 802.

by James Boswell's estimation in a letter to Sir David Dalrymple dated 30 July 1763: "a very curious composition, being a strange mixture of dun obscure and glowing genius at times".[15] Even Mrs. le Noir in conceding that the poem contained "some fine lines", regretfully concluded that "all a daughter's partiality could not lead the writer of this to admire it, nor all her pains, after many perusals, discover the beauties with which, when supposed lost, it was so liberally endowed". She saw it as "owing its celebrity to that idea, [Smart's versification of the Psalms] and to the marvellous story attached to it [the wainscot legend, which she considered 'too absurd for a serious refutation']".[16]

Contemporaneous magazine appraisals, however, codified the general tenor of public opinion. The Critical Review's critique was both cavalier and pityingly derisive: "Without venturing to criticize on the propriety of a Protesestant's [sic] offering up either hymns or prayers to the dead, we must be of opinion, that great rapture and devotion is discernable in this extatic song. It is a fine piece of ruins, and must at once please and affect a sensible mind". In this manner were Smart's theology, lucidity and literary abilities alike, consigned to oblivion. The Monthly Review, on the other hand, was more encouraging, and its comments — on the whole conciliatory and temperate — represented a genuine attempt

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15 Letters of James Boswell, ed. Chauncey Brewster Tinker, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1924), I, 39.

16 Miscellaneous Poems, 2 vols. (Reading, 1825-26), II, 72, 71.

at impartiality: "we could not but expect the performance before us to be greatly irregular; but we shall certainly characterize it more justly, if we call it irregularly great. . . . There is a grandeur, a majesty of thought, not without a happiness of expression". Although some passages appeared "almost, if not altogether unintelligible", the reviewer could still close with magnanimity: "It would be cruel, however, to insist on the slight defects and singularities of this piece, for many reasons. . . ."[17]

Notwithstanding the moderation of Langhorne's comments, free from complacency or condescension, their general substance remained quite explicit. Despite the poet's commitment and occasional flashes of brilliance, there was an overriding lack of mental control attributable only to residual derangement. Eighteenth-century distaste was also kindled by discovering a lyric carrying such complexity in both structure and meaning. As Arthur Sherbo notes, critics could "usually cope with recondite allusions in the poetry they sat in judgment upon; occasionally they confessed failure, but then they laid the blame on the poet and damned his obscurity".[18]

Nor was any sympathetic reassessment likely, given Smart's penchant for publicly arraigning his reviewers, who,

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17 The Critical Review, XV (April 1763), 324; ["Review by John Langhorne"], The Monthly Review, XXVIII (April 1763), 320-21.

18 Christopher Smart, p.170.

in any case, always possessed the upper hand. When, in his subsequent Poems, [1763] he appended a highly charged rejoinder to The Critical Review, the magazine merely retorted: "Mr. Smart's own words to any rational reader, must more than justify the character we gave of his song to David". And a later review, this time of Smart's Poems on Several Occasions, signalled an end to further exchanges: "But we will say no more of Mr. Smart: Peace be to the manes of his departed muse. Our sentiments with regard to this unfortunate gentleman are such as every man must feel on the same melancholy occasion".[19] These rebuttals were cruelly calculated to undermine any lingering notion of Smart's poetic merit by appealing to the accepted mores; in this manner were the conventions of the age both fostered and reflected.

Smart himself almost certainly considered A Song to David as the celebratory "wreath" crowning his Psalm translations and Hymns. Its re-appearance in a slightly altered form in the 1765 volume emphasized this inter-relationship, and suggested that the author had entertained high hopes for its success. Six years later, however, Smart was dead, and not until the close of the century was some revival of interest apparent. At this time Robert Anderson was engaged in producing A Complete Edition of the Poets of Great Britain. In his introduction to Smart he noted that "The Song to David

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[19] Vols. XVI (July 1763), 72; XVI (November 1763), 396.

is highly worthy of re-publication; and was recommended by the present writer to be inserted in this edition; but a copy could not be obtained for that purpose".[20] Only four years earlier Smart's nephew had omitted the Song altogether from his two-volume selection since it bore "for the most part melancholy proofs of the recent estrangement of his [Smart's] mind".[21] But the tide was slowly turning against that discriminatory taste which had governed Hunter's selections. Anderson (who printed five stanzas) had sensed "a bold and daring spirit, which bravely hazards what a vulgar mind could never suggest": an opinion endorsed by Chalmers in his collection which reproduced the same five verses.[22] Reviewing this latter compendium, The Quarterly Review reprinted stanzas XVIII, XXI and XL, remarking that Smart had "never written with more strength and animation, — and perhaps never with so much feeling", and lamented the loss of the Song as "greatly to be regretted".[23]

As if to correct this hiatus, A Song to David was finally reprinted in its entirety in 1819, apparently by a

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20 The Poetical Works of Christopher Smart, in A Complete Edition . . . , 13 vols. (London, 1795), XI, 115-203 (p.123).

21 Rev. Christopher Hunter, ed., The Poems, of the Late Christopher Smart, 2 vols. (Reading, 1791), I, xliii.

22 Anderson, ed., loc.cit.; Alexander Chalmers, ed., The Works of the English Poets, 21 vols. (London, 1810), XVI, 10-11.

23 ["Review of Chalmers's Works of the English Poets"], The Quarterly Review, XI No. 22 (July 1814), 480-504 (pp. 497, 496).

Rev. R. Harvey,[24] and reissued in 1827. Although it was omitted from Robert Southey's Specimens of the Later English Poets, Robert Chambers (who assessed Smart's Psalms as "destitute of talent") also admitted the Song, complete, to his Cyclopaedia of English Literature.[25] From this point its inclusion in anthologies was assured, though most selectors felt constrained to emphasize Smart's unique achievement by relegating the remainder of his verse to Lethe. George Gilfillan's response was typical: the bulk of Smart's oeuvre "scarcely furnish a point of comparison with the towering and sustained loftiness of . . . the 'Song to David'" which stands as "one of the grandest bursts of devotional and poetical feeling in the English language".[26] And Rossetti, who discovered in the poem "far more sterling English pith than anything else so early in that era", approached new heights of fatuous eloquence with his estimation: "the only great accomplished poem of the last century . . . a masterpiece of rich imagery,

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24 A Song to David by Christopher Smart [ed. Rev. R. Harvey] (London, 1819).

25 Specimens, 3 vols. (London, 1807); instead, Southey chose to print two of Smart's early poems: see II, 443-51; Cyclopaedia, 2 vols. (Edinburgh, 1844), II, 108, 109-12.

26 Specimens . . . of the Less-Known British Poets, 3 vols. (Edinburgh, 1860), III, 152, 151.

exhaustive resources, and reverberant sound".[27] Over a period of some hundred and fifty years, then, from its publication to its reception by the Victorians, criticism of the Song seemed to display in essence the whole gamut of aesthetic determinants; from Mason's curt evaluation which bespoke the final precarious expression of the neo-classical critique, to Rossetti's adulation which typified the equally dubious claims of post-Romantic excess.

Any lingering apprehension of the author as too much neglected was finally and spectacularly effaced in 1887 with the publication of Robert Browning's Parleyings, which marked a watershed in Smart criticism. This highly fanciful, visionary account was significant in three main areas. Firstly, by rhapsodizing the merits of Smart's masterpiece:

> A Song where flute-breath silvers trumpet-clang,
> And stations you for once on either hand
> With Milton and with Keats . . . [28]

Browning plucked the poet from relative obscurity and elevated him to a much higher place than he had hitherto occupied in the scale of literary achievement. Secondly, he advanced the fallacious notion of some momentary revelation of poetic

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27 Letters of Dante Gabriel Rossetti, ed. Oswald Doughty and John Robert Wahl, 4 vols. (Oxford, 1965-67), "Letter of [13 May 1880]", in IV (1967), 1766-74 (p.1772); T. Hall Caine, Recollections of Dante Gabriel Rossetti (London, 1882), pp.194-95.

28 Parleyings with Certain People of Importance in their Day (London, 1887), p.85.

splendour that had enabled Smart's imaginative genius to break through the fetters of a prose era. This transmutation into inspired insanity he rationalized through the theory of Divine intervention: a notion which would certainly have appealed to the casuist in Browning. And this, in turn, provided an acceptable explanation for the precise mechanism by which such transformation was wrought:

> . . . The man was sound
> And sane at starting: all at once the ground
> Gave way beneath his step, a certain smoke
> Curled up and caught him, or perhaps down broke
> A fireball wrapping flesh and spirit both
> In conflagration. Then — as heaven were loth
> To linger — let earth understand too well
> How heaven at need can operate — off fell
> The flame-robe, and the transfigured man
> Resumed sobriety, — as he began. . . .

Finally, in proclaiming the exceptional singularity of the Song, Browning was compelled to evaluate its worth in relation to Smart's complete poetic canon. This he did pictorially, by analogizing the Song to a brilliant chapel — its blazing artistry, richness and colour providing "one evidence/Of how far earth may rival heaven" — lying perdu in an otherwise commonplace mansion.[29] The unfortunate coincident of bringing the Song to immediate attention (thereby ensuring its reassessment, if not its immortality) was again to relegate the remainder of Smart's work to dull mediocrity.

This last-stated judgment was repeated ad infinitum and in various forms over the next four decades, whenever the merits

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[29] Parleyings, pp.84, 82.

of Smart's poem were celebrated. Only a few dissenting voices, perhaps inclining to an overview of the age rather than to the isolation of one particular work, tempered the general enthusiasm. Thomas Seccombe, although allowing "elements of real greatness", considered the Song to have been "absurdly described as a portent, or extravagantly praised as 'the only great accomplished poem of the eighteenth century'".[30] But the response of R.A. Streatfield, who brought out an edition in 1901, was more characteristic. After reducing Smart's biography to "a tale of debt, disease, and debauchery", he described the Song as "his one moment of inspiration . . . that wonderful burst of devotional rapture which has no parallel between the days of Crashaw and Blake". To Cyril Falls it represented "one bright flower budded in madness", while Edmund Gosse stated: "Save for one single lyric, that glows with all the flush and bloom of Eden, Smart would take but a poor place on the English Parnassus". At once it stood as "a miracle of uncovenanted lyric art", and, less loftily, as "an inestimable jewel buried in a dust-heap".[31]

The actual basis for this "miracle", however, was approached with more caution and less unanimity. Most commentators rightly assumed a relationship between Smart's

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30 The Age of Johnson (London, 1900), p.258.

31 R.A. Streatfeild, [sic] ed., A Song to David (London, 1901), p.5; Falls, The Critic's Armoury (London, 1924), p.109; Gosse, Gossip in a Library (London, 1891), p.195; Leaves and Fruit, pp.10, 4.

enthusiasm, his confinement, and the literary dictates of the age, but eschewed Browning's more theatrical depictment. Comparing the Song to Hunter's 1791 selections, Edmund Blunden explained the work as either "a poetic miracle, or psychological phenomenon".[32] Some critics favoured the former possibility: "furor vere poeticus has seized and inspired his victim"; "'the god' descended upon him"; others the latter: "bears the signs . . . of a spiritual intoxication"; and yet more combined elements of the two: "Smart was possessed by his subject . . . and where there is true possession — where the fires of the poet's imagination are not choked by self-consciousness or by too much fuel from the intellect — idiosyncrasy, mannerism, and even conventional formulae are for the time 'burnt and purged away'".[33] Notwithstanding these various equivocations, what emerged from Browning's whimsical account was a renewed interest in Smart; a revival expressed primarily through the publication of several new editions of A Song to David.[34]

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32 A Song to David with Other Poems (London, 1924), p.9.

33 A.W. Ward and A.R. Waller, eds., The Age of Johnson, Vol X of The Cambridge History of English Literature (Cambridge, 1913), p.154; J.R. Tutin, ed., A Song to David (London, 1898 [1897]), p.x; Francis Bickley, Christopher Smart", The Bookman, LXII No. 367 (April 1922), 10-12 (p.12); ["Review of Browning's Parleyings"], The Athenaeum, No. 3095, 19 February 1887, pp.247-49 (p.248).

34 See G.J. Gray, "A Bibliography of the Writings of Christopher Smart", Transactions of the Bibliographical Society, VI (February 1903), 269-303, s.v. [Item] XXXIX: A Song to David.

This poem also became the standard Smartian representative piece for anthologists and for period commentators, all of whom operated in the afterglow of Browning's championship.

The most notable critical advance of the last sixty years, however, corrected that understanding which divorced the Song from the mainstream of Augustan (and Smart's) verse, and which saw it either as a consecrated relic of metaphysical intensity, or, as a noble foreshadowment of romantic individuality. Certainly, from among the lyrical poems of the century, the Song is unique in its expression of religious ecstasy within the strictest formal boundaries. And this same quality of ardent emotional identification contained within the rime couée or standard six measure, has led to the more favoured classification of the Song as a trumpet-blast to the dawn of Romanticism. Yet, as one recent expositor states: "In order to discuss Smart in . . . these terms, the critics were obliged to dismiss the fundamental characteristics of both Smart's work and eighteenth-century poetry . . . . [His] later poetry . . . gives ample evidence of his classical training. It reflects also his acceptance of the eighteenth century's attitude towards nature . . . [and] synthesizes the age's interest and application of music and poetry".[35] And it is with this final consideration that I am principally concerned.

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[35] Blaydes, Christopher Smart, pp.42-43.

The correlation between A Song to David and music can be, and has been, stated most succinctly on the levels of structure and texture. Given Smart's preoccupation with order, it is not surprising that he should have adopted organic features for his verse that found ready analogies in music. Several commentators have noted these affinities in elucidating the Song's complex organization, and in so doing, have implied Smart's conscious use of musical texture and form: Baroque counterpoint and instrumental polyphony providing the most obvious parallels. Two recent critics writing in the 1960s, have cited eighteenth-century music as one of three elements fundamental to an understanding of Smart's artistry (the other sources are Hebraism and the critical pandects of Horace).[36] Referring to Smart's "interweaving of themes and counter-themes", Brittain characterizes the Song as "an elaborate fugue" in which seminal words or ideas re-appear in different associations and combinations.[37] Although, strictly speaking, such schematization bears greater semblance to the nineteenth-century use of leitmotif as a unifying device, Brittain's metaphor remains apt. Smart's intricate "pacing" of detail from line to line and strophe to strophe multiplies the significance of a particular phrase, both for the immediate imagistic context in which it occurs, and for the greater

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[36] See Blaydes, p.132, and Brittain, ed., p.298.

[37] Poems by Smart, p.298; in Jubilate Agno "praise" is the recurrent, reiterated fragment "counterpointed" throughout the whole.

architectonics of the whole.

Smart's consuming interest in the sound-value of rhyme and rhythm is apparent from the passage on "spiritual musick" in Jubilate Agno (B2. 584-602). "For every word has its marrow in the English tongue for order and for delight" (B2. 597), he wrote, as if cultivating the musical properties of language. The principle of harmony is as basic to the Song's technique as to its subject, and suggests the underlying qualifications that defined the lyric form: namely, its musical regularity, consonance, and flow. These characteristics derived from the original alliance of poetry and music, an inter-relationship that eighteenth-century theorists were especially intent on re-establishing: "as in musical composition, harmony is the result of a well chosen union and succession of sounds, so, in Poetry, there is a harmony or beauty, which springs from the most natural and pleasing arrangement of our ideas".[38]

Smart's accomplished command of "word-music" is ratified through the response of readers to the Song's melody and counterpoint. One wrote of its "chime and answer of stanza" and of "the glorious music and painting"; another of Smart's "enraptured, sumptuous and surprising music"; and Edmund Gosse developed a review founded on the poem's "orchestral effects". Concerning the "Adoration" stanzas, for instance, he wrote: "the mysterious word 'Adoration' . . . incessantly

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[38]Daniel Webb, Remarks on the Beauties of Poetry (London, 1762), p.89.

recurs with the blare of some brass instrument in an orchestra. And the writing from this point onward has an orchestral effect, as of a choral symphony, unseen figures of angelic ancestry joining in a loud unison of voice, harp, and clarion. Like the seraphim of Milton, the verses sing, and singing in their glory move".[39] Even Raymond Havens, outlining the numerological framework of the Song, described its "tutti" climax as "using the full orchestra in all its power for the first time at the conclusion of a symphony".[40]

Perhaps it should be observed that whilst these musically-derived critiques are pertinent to the discussion, both Gosse and Havens were writing in terms of a post-Beethovenian concept of the symphony which did not arrive in England until the 1790s — and then only the classical symphonic manner of Haydn. "Symphony" to Smart would have meant primarily what it meant to the Greeks — a "sounding together"— or else a preludial piece to a song (which he would have recalled from his Vauxhall days) or to an opera in the form of an overture. Nevertheless, it is of interest that critics should employ nineteenth-century musical terminology in defining a poem which was championed so highly in this century. Moreover, although these

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39 Blunden, ed., pp. 21, 10; Bickley, p.12; Gosse, Leaves and Fruit, p.6. Gosse notes of one "polyphonic" strand: "the flute is heard above the trumpet", and analogizes the Song's movement to "the tumult of the symphony" (p.8).

40 "The Structure of Smart's Song to David", RES, XIV No. 54 (April 1938), 172-82 (p.182).

impressionistic accounts stem directly from the Browning line of criticism, they are, as Brittain notes, significant for drawing attention to the musical analogies inherent in the structure of the poem.

As a "musical prayer of adoration", however, the Song "is defining the function and purpose of music, prayer and adoration, while at the same time it is fulfilling that function".[41] It forms a paean of homage directed to God through the tribute of an idealized David: that man of prayer and praise par excellence, and, as Smart understood it, the epitome of human perfectibility. Delany's Life of David is the accepted prime antecedent that fashioned Smart's conception of his alter ego, whose life commingled Mosaic and Christian ethical precepts. But David also created a link between the pagan (through fusion with Orpheus) and Judaic traditions, by determining the spiritual potencies inherent in the created world. In this sense, David "as the singer of praise and the unifying spirit, becomes Smart's Orpheus symbol . . . In the Song, it is David's harp and David's song which identify the unifying Spirit of the world and universe and which catalogue the objects and beings of God's creation".[42] David, moreover, was the nonpareil of praise; his gratitude was expressed in hymns that conveyed the essentially Hebraic response of Smart's own artistic and theological predisposition.

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[41] Blaydes, p.111.

[42] Ibid., pp.131-32.

It is therefore necessary to examine these analogies more closely, in order to understand fully the implications of Smart's beliefs.

It was the poet's particular thesis to claim for David/Orpheus the power of imaginatively recreating the primal order of creation through his music:

> To bless each valley, grove and coast,
> And charm the cherubs to the post
> Of gratitude in throngs;
> To keep the days on Zion's mount,
> And send the year to his account,
> With dances and with songs. . . .
> (A Song to David, st. II)

Smart's choice of emblem for David makes the inheritance explicit, and reveals music as the appointed catalyst that underlines creation's first affinities. The harp, which is evoked pictorially in the Song's opening stanza, was the biblical instrument assigned to David (who expressly appointed harpists in Temple worship), and the mystical analogue for knowledge in the book of Revelation. It also stands synonymously for the whole divinely proportioned macrocosm: both method and operation. The intimate relationship between David/Orpheus and God is epitomized in the pivotal clause "God's harp thy symbol" (st. XXXVIII) which concludes the "pillars of knowledge" section. And significantly, stanzas XXXIX to XLIX that summarize the biblical moral code follow immediately on this passage, for God's seminal Act is bound to His appointed laws that

govern its operation. David not only "sung of God — the mighty source/Of all things" (st. XVIII), but Orpheus also "playd upon the harp in the spirit by breathing upon the strings". And "this will affect every thing that is sustaind by the spirit, even every thing in nature" (Jubilate Agno, C. 55, 56). Orpheus's "breath" symbolizes his perception of the inherent Divinity of creation: his spirit is absorbed into God's life-imparting Spirit, from which the spirit of the earth took its form.

Christopher M. Dennis, writing on this decalogue section, sees in the harp of David a carefully evolved "structural conceit" that also relates to Smart's personal typography.[43] He interprets the central stanzas XXXIX-XLVIII in terms of a ten-string harp, corresponding etymologically and typographically to the Ten Commandments, and framed by the two "support" stanzas XXXVIII and XLIX, both of which invoke David by name. Smart's ascription of "God's harp" to David as his symbol offers apparent evidence for the association, which is supported (collaterally) by certain of the Psalms and patristic commentaries. Although support for this interpretation may be adduced through reference to numerological and emblematic traditions, the instrument, as has already been indicated, appears to be a more pervasive metaphor than is commonly conceded. A reading of Jubilate Agno in particular, in conjunction with corresponding passages in the Song,

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[43] "A Structural Conceit in Smart's Song to David", RES, NS, XXIX No. 115 (1978), 257-66.

corroborates a conceptual, as well as a structural, interpretation of "God's harp".[44] But Dennis is certainly correct to emphasize the Psalmist's historical and musical bifunctionality: "The fact that David plays a 'harp' of which the 'strings' are the laws of the Commandments given to Moses links his functions as leader of his people and 'minister of praise', God's poet". And this apparent doctrinal abstruseness on Smart's part is quite at one with his linguistic virtuosity and experimentation in general, for, as Dennis notes, "Such relations between words themselves and pictures or images of words merely serve to intimate the ultimate unity of all aspects of Creation".[45]

Because A Song to David was composed during Smart's asylum period, it is not surprising that even a cursory perusal of the text should reveal something of the same fecundity of thought that informed Jubilate Agno. Whereas the latter's fragmentation indicates the working through of process and form, the Song refines these same elements within a circumscribed poetic structure. Organically, however, the complexity remains, and no analysis of the

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44 In the decalogue section Smart was possibly aware of more complex associations deriving from the Pythagorean tetraktys, or sacred number, whose sum contains all the numbers involved in musical ratios (1+2+3+4); passages in Jubilate Agno (as C.19-34) imply Smart's interest in occult, as opposed to specifically Christian, numerology.

45 "A Structural Conceit", pp.263, 265. Note, for instance, Smart's illustrational pun on mēm ם (harp-shaped) in Jubilate Agno, B2. 524, to support the signification, "musick".

Song may be made independent of the formularies of Jubilate Agno.

Although the work draws heavily on scriptural sources (J.R. Tutin's edition (1898) lists over fifty direct references), it also bears close stylistic affinities with eighteenth-century traditionalism. Some critics have disclosed Masonic and cabbalistic overtones, though the esoteric nature of these cults renders such claims easier to posit than to prove. Certainly the Song is constructed on intricate numerological principles, and there are obvious similarities between Smart's Christological beliefs and those of his mystical contemporary, William Law.[46] Nor does it counter the discursive ease of the Seatonian poems, or stand apart from the vast mass of Psalm translations, of which it forms the quintessential distillation. For Smart's religious poems, taken together, embody his conviction that all knowledge is foreshadowed by, and contained in, the biblical concept of God: "The various histories enrich/ Of God's recorded works" (A Song to David, st. XXXV), and reiterate the theme of praise as an expression of obligation.

Jubilate Agno opens with an invocation to musical worship:

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46 See The Spirit of Prayer, Two Parts (London, 1749, 1750); The Way to Divine Knowledge (London, 1752); and The Spirit of Love (London, 1752, 1754).

> Rejoice in God, O ye Tongues . . .
>
> Nations, and languages, and every Creature, in which is the breath of Life . . .
>
> (A. 1, 2)

and continues with a methodical linking of Old Testament figures and animals that underlines the essential unity of creation's hymn. Similarly, A Song to David establishes at the outset the authority of God's sovereign poet:

> O THOU, that sit'st upon a throne,
> With harp of high majestic tone,
> To praise the King of kings;[47]
>
> (st. I)

and introduces the parallel theme of musical psalmody as the expression of gratitude, with David — "The minister of praise at large" — as its chief exponent. There are strong biblical echoes in this opening apostrophe. As God had promised the establishment of David's lineage and kingdom for ever (II Samuel 7.16), so the shepherd king honours his Supreme Ruler. He whom God "raised up on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob" (II Samuel 23.1), is crowned according to the Revelation of St. John the Divine: "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne" (Revelation 3.21). On earth he had "praised the holy one most High, with words of glory, with his whole heart he sung songs, and loved him that made him"

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[47] Compare "King of kings" (Revelation 17.14). In Revelation, the Hebrew word for harp is given as cithara; in the Old Testament, it appears as kinnōr.

(Ecclesiasticus 47.8);[48] and so in heaven he joins the concert of the elect, ministering unceasingly before God in melody and praise:

> And voice of heav'n-ascending swell,
> Which, while its deeper notes excell,
> Clear, as a clarion, rings. . . .[49]
> (st. I)

The predominance of biblical allusions continues in the second stanza which elaborates the power and purpose of David's music: to bless the natural order, to lead the angelic hosts in praise and to inaugurate the church's festivals. Mount Zion in Jerusalem is named the "city of David" (II Samuel 5.7); "dances and songs" recalls David's performing before the Ark (II Samuel 6.14-16; I Chronicles 15); and the musical regulation of the calendar, his setting of musicians in the synagogue (I and II Chronicles). The "post/Of gratitude" alludes to David's great psalm of thanksgiving (I Chronicles 16.7-36), and a few stanzas later, "To smite the lyre, the dance compleat," provides further explicit reference to the entry of the Ark of the Covenant. Patrick Delany's Historical Account had included "A Dissertation upon Dancing" that vindicated the art as a

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48 See also I Chronicles 13.8, 15.16, 16.7; II Chronicles 29.30; II Samuel 6.5, 22.50, et passim.

49 Note also Revelation 14.2-3, 15.2-3. The bright, reiterated "c" sound is among the first (compare "harp"/"high") of many alliterative doublets employed particularly in the third and final lines of each stanza, that help lend to the Song its peculiarly musical character.

"most natural expression of joy, and . . . a natural fountain of joy"; when "accompanied with vocal and instrumental musick" it spoke "to the eye, to the ear, to the soul". Notwithstanding Delany's exoneration of David's "singing, and shouting, and leaping, and dancing before the LORD, according as the various measures of the musick inspired and directed", Smart had also "prophesied" in "favour of dancing which in mutual benevolence is for the glory of God" (Jubilate Agno, C. 94), and had blessed Christ in the "musicians & dancers this holiday-time" (D. 205).[50] For he held posture as an integral part of worship, and rhythmical movement, which Delany had characterized as "silent poetry",[51] he analogised as prayer.

The fourth stanza announces a twelve-part "wreath" enumerating the "excellence and lustre of David's character". This section, again founded primarily on biblical narrative, is reinforced by Delany's commentary and incorporates certain of Smart's idiosyncratic theological beliefs. Chief among David's attributes is his surpassing excellence as a man of prayer and praise:

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50 Delany, II (1742), 162-83 (pp. 167, 172, 127); note also Jubilate Agno, A. 67: "Let Jakim with the Satyr bless God in the dance"; see II Samuel 6.14.

51 An Historical Account, II, 170.

Clean in his gestures, hands, and feet,
To smite the lyre, the dance compleat,
To play [ply] the sword and spear.[52]
(st. IX)

Notes from yon exaltations caught,
Unrival'd royalty of thought,
O'er meaner strains supreme.
(st. X)

David's (and Smart's) "eternal theme" is God: God the Omnipotent extolled in His sublimity, and God the Creator meditated in His immanence. Smart represents David's disposition as prayerfully directed towards contemplation (st. XI), and his will as accordant with Divine decrees. Scriptural passages affirm the Psalmist's devotion to the Sabbath, and once more Smart finds for the active observance of God's law (the seventh day being that of rest) a ready analogy in music:

'Twas then his thoughts self-conquest prun'd,
And heavenly melancholy tun'd,
To bless and bear the rest.[53]
(st. XI)

The Bible also records the exactitude with which David ordained musicians for Temple worship. The pivotal stanza XVII, following Smart's prefatial analysis: "He consecrates his genius for consolation and edification", sets forth David's primacy as a singer and poet, and employs imagery derived from the close association of the sister arts: "His muse,

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52 Smart's unusual syntax recalls Horatian curiosa felicitas which strongly influenced all his post-asylum work.

53 Compare Jubilate Agno, C. 85: "For the seventh day is the Sabbath according to the word of God direct for ever and ever".

bright angel of his verse,/Gives balm for all the thorns that pierce".

The nine-stanza section comprising verses XVIII to XXVI catalogues the subjects of David's great Song of Praise, both empyreal and sublunary. Chief among these is the Supreme Authority: "He sung of God — the mighty source/Of all things" — Who, in turn, is hymned by His collateral divinity: "Angels . . . [who] with their citterns wait".[54] But praise is also the spontaneous tribute of natura rerum, linked to transcendent God and reasoning man through the Chain of Being.[55] All of its contrasting elements, tuneful and inharmonious, living and inanimate, by revelation of their function swell the chorus. Nothing is excluded from the universal concert: the songbird together with the domestic fowl; the ocean-dwellers and the bright-glancing surface shoals; even the luminous topaz, hidden from man's gaze, silently adds its accordant note. All expand the Christian Orpheus's song; all communicate Smart's earnest and ecstatic consciousness of the living

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54 "Cittern" (1763 and 1765 edns.), as in Pope's translation of The Iliad of Homer, Book XVIII. 574: "Cittern's silver Sound"; or Francis Bacon, Sylva Sylvarum: Or a Naturall Historie (London, 1626): "Bandora, Orpharion, or Cittern[e]" (p.46); but more commonly "cithern": see Johnson's Dictionary, s.v. Cithern. Citterns, or harps, appear in Revelation numerous times in accounts of the New Jerusalem; note also I Maccabees 4.54.

55 See Arthur O. Lovejoy, The Great Chain of Being, The William James Lectures, 1933 (1936 ; rpt. Harvard, 1942), pp.183-241.

relationship between the Supreme Being and the minute particulars of His universe.[56]

An abrupt return to biblical exposition for stanzas XXVII to XXIX (see Appendix I) links the creation verses with the enigmatic "pillars of knowledge" section, the latter deriving from the Jewish conception of the creative power of God's Name: "His WORD accomplish'd the design" (st. XXX). The cryptogrammatic symbolism of the seven pillars (taken from Proverbs 9.1) has given rise to diverse critical interpretations, all of which have attempted to reconcile the Greek figuration with biblical (chiefly Genesis) typification, in some cases by way of allusion — doubtful, in my opinion — to Masonic symbolism.

Fr. Christopher Devlin analogizes the days of creation to seven aspects of the Incarnation (through reference to theophanies or Divine foreshadowings of Christ), a theory propounded by William Law and evidently supported by Smart himself.[57] According to this view, Iota, the fifth day, forms one of a trio dedicated to restoring harmony in the lower orders, that "the outward condition and frame of visible nature" might become "a plain manifestation of that spiritual world from which

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56 Compare A Song to David, st. XL — "All nature, without voice or sound,/Replied. . ." — with Jubilate Agno, Bl. 234.

57 Poor Kit Smart, pp.140-49. See also Katherine M. Rogers, "The Pillars of the Lord: Some Sources of 'A Song to David'", PQ, XL (October 1961), 525-34; and Charles Parish, "Christopher Smart's 'Pillars of the Lord'", MLQ, XXIV (June 1963), 158-63.

it is descended".[58] Smart's direct reference is to Genesis 1.20-23, which records the generation of sea and air-dwelling creatures. In particularizing God's universe through the multifarious birdsongs Smart draws on a favourite image,[59] for in the frequency and urgency of their cries he saw an emblem of instinctive praise:

> Iota's tun'd to choral hymns
> Of those that fly, while he that swims
> In thankful safety lurks. . . .
> (st. XXXV)

Even discounting the possible mystical correlative of Christ's descent into the Virgin's womb, Smart's associations are clear. Iota (ninth letter of the Greek alphabet) corresponds to ninefold harmony — "For Nine is a number very good and harmonious" (Jubilate Agno, C. 33) — and perfect concord (three times three) to choral oblation both avian and angelic: "Let Cherub rejoice with the Cherub who is a bird and a blessed Angel" (Jubilate Agno, Bl. 122). In occult philosophy nine is also highly esteemed as a self-compounding of the trinitarian three (itself denoting holy perfection), and corresponds numerologically to the Muses, the heavenly orbs (themselves governed by music), the grades of angelic beings, and to other Christian and astrological orders.[60]

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58 William Law, quoted in Devlin, p.142.

59 See Jubilate Agno, A. 105-113.

60 See Henricus Cornelius Agrippa, De Occulta Philosophia Libri Tres ([Cologne], 1533), Lib. II, p.124. The associations of ninefold harmony are well documented in literature, as Milton's "To the celestial Sirens harmony,/That sit upon the nine enfolded Sphears" ("Arcades", ll. 63-64).

Stanza XXXVIII heralds a summary of the biblical moral code, in which Smart's positive interpretation of prohibitory injunctions recalls his similar technique of "Christianization" throughout the Psalms translation and in the Hymns for ... Children. Verse XLVI, for instance, elaborates the virtue of charity — the converse of deceit as condemned by the Sixth Commandment, "Thou shalt not steal" — which, when practised, can "make the widow's heart-strings blithe". Smart's image conjoins Job 29.13: "and I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy", with Isaiah 16.11: "Wherefore my bowels shall sound like an harp",[61] and iterates the ancient body-as-instrument concept.

A further panegyric of David, "highest in the list/Of worthies" (st. XLIX) is succeeded by the celebrated "Adoration" stanzas that renew Smart's dominant theme of praise as exemplified through "the seasons, and the right use of them". Smart disposes his verses into three groups of seven, the first two of which concern all levels and ranks of creation that display God's boundless ingenuity. A transitional stanza (LXIV) recalls the accessory to "DAVID's psalms" and the self-discipline of their singer, and leads to an "exercise upon the senses, and how to subdue them". In terms of formal beauty — gradation, flow and cadence — and of linguistic ingenuity, the "Adoration" section contains some of Smart's

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61 Note also Jeremiah 48.36: "and mine heart shall sound like pipes", and Ephesians 5.19: "making melody in your heart to the Lord".

most characteristic and accomplished writing. His finest images transcend the surrounding textural density through their supra-logical artlessness. As one critic has stated, "within the universe of poetic rhetoric, this simplicity pierces, and counts for so much, precisely because it strikes into a fabric that is not simple at all, but on the contrary elaborately patterned".[62]

Stanza LXV details the sense of touch by reference to the renowned imitative abilities of the bull-finch:

> For ADORATION, beyond match,
> The scholar bulfinch aims to catch
> The soft flute's iv'ry touch. . . .
> (ll. 1-3)

Smart alludes here to the eighteenth-century pastime of tutoring song-birds by way of a specially designed flute or "bird" flageolet, to the extent that they even renounced their own melodies in favour of a learned ditty. The bull-finch, possessing no true song of its own, could be "trained to pipe a whole tune, or more, to perfection, that is to say, do it, so far as intonation and rhythm are concerned, as well as any skilled musician".[63] Anthologies of musical lessons were assembled for this purpose, and The Bird Fancyer's Delight, a

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62 Donald Davie, ed., Augustan Lyric (London, 1974), p.21.

63 George Henschel, "Bullfinch and Canary", Nature: A Weekly Illustrated Journal of Science, LXVII, 30 April 1903, pp.609-10 (p.609). Shakespeare mentions the finch in A Midsummer Night's Dream, III.i.125. Note also an account of bullfinches repeating "several short Tunes" played upon "an Ivory Flagellet", in Mrs. Midnight's Orations; and Other Select Pieces (London, 1763), p.20.

twenty-page collection of tunes "Compos'd within the Compass and faculty of each Bird", provides a representative selection.[64] That the practice continued throughout the century is suggested by William Cowper's "On the Death of Mrs. Throckmorton's Bulfinch", first published in 1795, which contains the following lines:

> And though by nature mute,
> Or only with a whistle blest,
> Well-taught, he all the sounds express'd
> Of flagelet or flute.[65]

The epithet by which Smart designates his instrument of tutorage recalls Dryden's "soft . . . FLUTE" and Milton's "Flutes and soft Recorders".[66] Allowing Smart's generic use of "ivory" as a descriptive term, this material was, in fact, highly esteemed in the eighteenth century for the construction of wind instruments. It was virtually always the preferred substance for mouthpiece and mounts, and both Continental and English makers, valuing its elegant appearance, produced ornate, solid ivory flutes (of both the flûte à bec

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64 The Bird Fancyer's Delight (London, [c. 1730]). Similar compilations include an earlier edition of the above work (1714), Bird Fancier's Recreation (London, 1728), and The Bird-Fancier's Necessary Companion (London, 1762).

65 Poems, new edition, 2 vols. (London, 1798), II, 295-98 (p.295); the incident here described occurred in 1788. See also "The Bulfinch in Town. By a Lady of Quality", in R. [obert] Dodsley, comp., A Collection of Poems in Six Volumes, 2nd ed. (London, 1758), IV, 306-7.

66 "A Song for St Cecilia's Day, 1687", first Broadside edn. (London, 1687), BL, Macdonald 25; Paradise Lost, I, 551. Note also N. [icholas] Rowe, The Fair Penitent (London, 1703), II.i.131: "softly-breathing Flute". The Tatler, 157 for 8-11 April 1710, describes the flute as "sweet and soft in its Sound": the appellation was common.

and flauto traverso types).[67] The high-pitched flageolet, a smaller instrument than the common flute (or baroque recorder), was frequently fashioned entirely in ivory.[68]

Through reference to the aeolian harp (see Appendix II) Smart defines the aural sense, and completes his stanza by summoning the Universal Spirit:

> Hark! 'tis a voice — how still, and small —
> That makes the cataracts to fall,
> Or bids the sea be smooth.[69]
> (st. LXVII)

Smart infers here that sound, as with light, is propagated to all distances instantaneously because it is "actuated by the divine conception" (Jubilate Agno, Bl. 284). The "voice of God direct" (B2. 585) is manifest in creation through the revelation of natural phenomena. As the young poet wrote in his first Seatonian poem:

> Before "the Morning-Stars together sang"
> And hail'd Thee Architect of countless worlds,

and again in the fourth effusion:

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67 See Eighteenth Century Musical Instruments: France and Britain, comp. G. Thibault, Jean Jenkins and Josiane Bran-Ricci, Victoria and Albert Museum (London, 1973); Philip Bate, The Flute (London, 1969), plates pp.xvi-1.

68 Note Jubilate Agno, Bl. 243: "For the GERMAN FLUTE is an indirect — the common flute good. . . ."

69 Compare Jubilate Agno, Bl. 226, 234, 246-49, 254, 271; B2. 585; C. 55.

> But what is this, celestial tho' the note,
> And proclamation of the reign supreme,
> Compar'd with such as, for a mortal ear
> Too great, amaze the incorporeal worlds?[70]

For in Scripture God is not only divined in wind, earthquake or fire, but He is revealed in a "still small voice" perceptible only to His anointed prophets.[71]

The final section, "An amplification in five degrees", comprises five groups of three stanzas, each set developing a particular virtue from its natural or human signification to its spiritual or sacramental expression, as disclosed in David, and finally, in Christ. The first two verses in each case picture the quality as it inheres in a mortal realm: stanza LXXIII draws on the musician-as-bee image that Smart had earlier incorporated into stanza XXXVIII:

> O strength, O sweetness, lasting ripe!
> God's harp thy symbol, and thy type
> The lion and the bee![72]
>
> (st. XXXVIII)

> Sweet the musician's ardour beats,
> While his vague mind's in quest of sweets,
> The choicest flow'rs to hive.
>
> (st. LXXIII)

In Jubilate Agno Smart had claimed for flowers a dimension within the sphere of visual homophony: "For flowers are musical in ocular harmony" (B2. 508). In the Song the

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70 On the Eternity of the Supreme Being (Cambridge, 1750), ll. 26-27; On the Power of the Supreme Being (Cambridge, 1754), ll. 16-19.

71 I King 19.12; see also Psalm 19.1—4.

72 Smart's biblical source is Judges 14.14, 18: "out of the strong came forth sweetness"; "What is sweeter than honey? and what is stronger than a lion?"; the blend of sweetness and strength is integral to Smart's conception of David.

musician is analogized to a bee, seeking out the most alluring pollens; questing for the finest musical substance from which to fashion his compositions. Yet sweeter than those endowments that merely serve human endeavour, and of infinitely greater worth, is David's loving response to his Deity:

> Sweeter in all the Strains of love,
> The language of thy turtle dove,
> Pair'd to thy swelling chord;
> Sweeter with ev'ry grace endu'd,
> The glory of thy gratitude,
> Respir'd unto the Lord.
> (st. LXXIV)

The remaining tripartite groupings follow a similar movement from physical and moral beauty to religious beauty, as the Song approaches its emotional and theological climax. The contrapuntal complexity and interior coalescence of earlier sections gives way to a cumulative velocity that "embraces the whole sweep of the cosmic drama".[73] Stanza LXXXIV describes God's revelation in the cosmos: "Glorious the trumpet and alarm"; stanza LXXXV delineates humanity's aspiration for God: "Glorious the song, when God's the theme"; and stanza LXXXVI, God's eucharistic descent, through His assumption of human form in the Incarnation. Herein lies God's most glorious humiliation; herein lies mankind's greatest glory. To Christ belongs the highest crown of all:

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[73] William Force Stead, ed., Rejoice in the Lamb: A Song from Bedlam (London, 1939), p.142.

Glorious — more glorious is the crown
Of Him, that brought salvation down
   By meekness, call'd thy Son;
Thou at stupendous truth believ'd,
And now the matchless deed's atchiev'd,
   DETERMIN'D, DAR'D, and DONE.

CHAPTER SEVEN PSALMS I

> THE honours of the pow'r supreme,
> All earth with joy rehearse;
> O make his praise the glorious theme
> Of everlasting verse.[1]

In contemplating any poetical adaptation, be it of Scripture or of an esteemed secular model, the author could elect one of two main compositional methods. He could avoid possible stylistic incongruity by consciously narrowing his range of descriptive and linguistic devices, or, conversely, he could amplify the text according to his distinctive expressive or didactic purpose. In either case the ensuing work too often displayed little evidence of any real resolution. A laborious imitation appeared enervated and pedestrian; free treatment of the text invited diffuseness, tedious periphrasis and obscurity which was unlikely to be alleviated by rigid schematization, as in Smart's version of the Psalms. Here, virtually without exception, one verse of Scripture is turned into one stanza of poetry.

In view of these potential obstacles, why did eighteenth-century poets, in particular, apply themselves so often to "translations", whose number and variety are matched only by a

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[1] Psalm LXVI, ll. 1-4; all quotations are from Christopher Smart, A Translation of the Psalms of David, Attempted in the Spirit of Christianity, and Adapted to the Divine Service (London, 1765).

correspondingly wide-ranging scale of merits? Some works, such as Smart's prose translation of Horace (1756), were purely financial exercises, written to order; others, like Gray's Norse and Welsh poems, represented an attempt at rekindling within contemporary idiom the spirit of a distant culture; many, such as Johnson's Vanity of Human Wishes, owed their genesis to the revered classical models of Juvenal, Virgil or Horace; yet more— Smart's Parables of Our Lord — attempted to revitalize Holy Scripture and render it more accessible to some sector of Augustan society.

Although a committed Anglican and champion of established forms, Smart evidently intended to reform The Book of Common Prayer, itself revised and standardized in 1662. Notwithstanding the unequivocal injunctions laid down in "The Acts for the Uniformity of Common Prayer", sections of the compilers' "Preface" also paralleled the poet's sense of purpose: "exciting . . . Piety and Devotion in the publick Worship of God" by styling "some Words or Phrases of ancient usage, in Terms more suitable to the Language of the present times".[2] Moreover, according to the exordium "Of Ceremonies", Christ's Gospel "is not a ceremonial Law . . . but it is a Religion to serve God, not in bondage of the figure or shadow, but in the freedom of the spirit". Translating the Psalms into metre was by no means an innovatory eighteenth-century undertaking, especially as there could be "a semblance of control over

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[2] This and following quotations are taken from The Book of Common Prayer . . . with the Psalter or Psalms of David (London, 1728).

religious enthusiasm if it were channeled by music and permitted to expunge itself properly and with decorum through a spiritually uplifting song".[3] But a major difficulty lay in reconciling "the Language of the present times" with "freedom of the spirit".

According to an early reviewer of James Merrick's version, the "different genius of the English and the Hebrew poetry" consigned to futility any such attempts: "The eastern muse is daring, fervent, and unsubdued in her progress; snatching at figures remote in their nature and disposition; frequently inattentive to consistency and connection; desultory in sentiment, and abrupt in expression. These properties are utterly unfit for the regular and limited walks of rhyme . . . the songs of Sion will no more bend to the genius of a strange language, than their singers would of old to the commands of their conquerors, when called upon to sing them in a strange land".[4] Forced songs though they might have been, the considerable number of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century translations testified both to the universal spirituality, and to the universal agelessness, of the Psalter. Given this appeal, the alacrity with which poets "restrung" the harp of David is hardly remarkable, and it is as part of this tradition that Smart's renderings can most accurately be assessed.

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3 Blaydes, Christopher Smart, p.40.

4 ["Review of Merrick's Translation of the Psalms"], The Monthly Review, XXXIII (September 1765), 230-35 (pp. 230-31).

Nowhere in the Old Testament as in the Psalms may "the Faithful . . . find so much comfort, and so high Raptures of Devotion, as those . . . with which the Holy Spirit moved David and his fellow-Prophets". So wrote an early eighteenth-century editor of the Book of David. Another commentator, reiterating these sentiments some sixty years later, defended biblical diction against the contemporary vogue of poetic usurpation: in a translation "confined to Rhyme, or any certain Measure, there will often be a kind of Necessity for departing not a little from that Plainness and Simplicity, which, in their Originals, give these awful Hymns so much Dignity".[5] For by this time The Critical Review could confidently pronounce that few versifiers had "preserved the fire and energy of the original. The generality of our northern poets either sink into a low prosaic stile, or attempt to raise their numbers by an affected pomp of words". Especially distasteful were poetic ornaments; those "fictions of imagination" which destroyed the "genuine graces" of Hebrew through the "fetters of rhyme".[6]

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5 A Divine of the Church of England, [P. Allix] ed., The Book of Psalms (London, 1701), p.vi; [Rev. George Fenwick], The Psalter in its Original Form (London, 1759), p.iii.

6 ["Review of Merrick's and Smart's Translation(s) of the Psalms"], The Critical Review, XX (September 1765), 208-16 (p.209). Compare Wordsworth's strictures on biblical paraphrases in "Appendix" [on Poetic Diction] to Lyrical Ballads (1802), 3rd ed., 2 vols. (London, 1802), II (2nd ed.), 237-47.

But if the results were unconvincing, there was no doubting the earnestness with which versifiers approached their task, and most felt compelled to prefix their versions with some high-minded remarks:

> A Just and proper Version of the PSALMS, to be used in Publick Divine Service, requires the following Qualifications: It ought to be strictly agreeable to the Original Hebrew: It ought to express all the Sentiments in the Original, and no More, but when there is a Necessity to supply the Connexion, or to remove the Obscurity of some Places arising from the Concise and sometimes Abrupt Stile peculiar to the Hebrew Writers: (For if in the Prose Translation such Supplements are unavoidable, they are yet more allowable in Verse.) It ought to be close in Opposition to diffusive Expressions, otherwise it will be too Paraphrastical: It ought to have a poetical Turn, otherwise it will not be Verse, but a literal prosaick Translation: It ought to preserve the proper Hebrew Stile, that David may speak in his own Spirit and Manner of Diction, and therefore Foreign Embellishments, Allusions and Metaphors, which corrupt the Purity and debase the Dignity of the Original, are not allowable: It ought to have the Propriety and Perfection of the English Language which excludes all sordid, obsolete, and obscure Words and Phrases, that dishonour the Divine Text, and offend the Ears of Intelligent Persons: It ought by its Plainness to be accommodated to the Capacities of the Common People, not set off with too much Ornament, nor yet left naked or in a slovenly Dress, but should be pleasing and agreeable by a beautiful Cleanness, and an elegant Simplicity. A New Version ought to preserve the Tunes, which the People have been long accustomed to, least upon missing of them, they should complain of Loss and Injury. And lastly, it is required, That the Verse should be harmonious, smooth, and easy.[7]

The theory was certainly unimpeachable, but in practice virtually every approach was defensible. In one instance use of the English Heroic was vindicated: since "all Poetry is musick

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[7] Richard Blackmore, A New Version of the Psalms of David (London, 1721), "The Preface", sigs. $A4^{r-v}$.

in itself", the Heroic, as a general favourite, could claim advantage over a "Prose Translation, or one in other Measures, for private Use, and in . . . devotional Retirements".[8] Omissions and garbling were common: John Patrick admitted to having left "many Psalms untranslated", and also to selecting "only some portions of Psalms" in those he had undertaken.[9] The generalizing effect of such compression is self-evident, as in this example from his treatment of Psalm 150:

> Praise him in the sound of the trumpet: praise him upon the lute and harp.
>
> Praise him in the cymbals and dances: praise him upon the strings and pipes.
>
> Praise him upon the well-tuned cymbals: praise him upon the loud cymbals. (vv.3-5)[10]
>
> Musicks soft notes, and louder sounds
> Of instruments imploy
> T'excite Devotion, and attend
> The triumphs of your joy.[11]

But closest to Smart's translation in design, if not in execution, was the version of the dissenting minister Isaac

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8 Steph.[en] Wheatland and Tipping Silvester, The Psalms of David, translated into Heroic Verse (London, 1754), p.xv.

9 A Century of Select Psalms (London, 1679), "Preface", sigs. $A6^{r-v}$. This random organization of material was redressed, in some degree, by The Psalms of David in Meter (London, 1694) which translated the remaining psalms and provided alternative versions to those published in 1679.

10 All quotations from the Psalter refer to the Coverdale version (Smart's basic text) in The Book of Common Prayer; references to the Authorized Version (KJV) are noted separately. To avoid ambiguity, Coverdale and KJV psalms are underlined throughout; those of Smart are in standard type.

11 Select Psalms, p.179.

Watts. In his "Preface" Watts laid down as the "chief Design of Psalmody" that "we should represent our own sense of things in Singing, and address ourselves to God expressing our own Case; therefore the Words should be so far adapted to the general State of the Worshippers, as that we might seldom sing those Expressions in which we have no Concern".[12] Addressing himself to the "Heart and Conscience of many pious and observing Christians", Watts saw in the Psalms an incongruity between personal expression and the numerous Hebraic ceremonial and historical references. His solution was to modify these linguistic and devotional impediments so that they "always speak the common Sense and Language of a Christian". To this end he omitted psalms wholly or in part, adapted others to western worship, converted animosity into inner conflict, fitted language to "the general Circumstances of Men" and realized Old Testament prophecy in fulfilment of the New. Faith and love displaced fear, spiritual atonement supplanted blood sacrifice, and the immutability of heavenly blessings discredited worldly honours; in short, Scripture was turned into a "Psalm-book for Christians after the Manner of the Jewish Psalter".

Watts professed to find few difficulties in his choice of diction: "I have always avoided the Language of the Poets

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12 The Psalms of David Imitated in the Language of the New Testament, and apply'd to the Christian State and Worship (London, 1719), p.x.

where it did not suit the Language of the Gospel", and claimed biblical precedence in answer to possible imputations of repetitiveness: "If I am charged by the Criticks for repeating the same Rhymes too often,[13] let them consider, that the Words which continually recur in divine Poesy admit exceeding few Rhymes to them fit for sacred Use".[14] Although his text was graced with authorial annotation, the psalms themselves, curtailed and often fragmentary in structure, offered few risks: specific and impersonal phraseology alike was resolved into a general synthesis of pious admonishment and conventional praise.

Smart's long-awaited version of 1765 was presented, then, to a reading public already familiar with translations of varying degrees of merit, and steeped in the divergent critical stances that had determined their conception and accompanied their distribution. His Psalms were first contemplated as early as 1752, for in Jubilate Agno Smart had prayed for "the soul of Crockatt the bookseller the first to put me upon a version of the Psalms" (D.210), referring to an agent who operated in London between 1726 and 1752. They were almost certainly composed and completed wholly during the poet's confinement, and although published two

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13 This charge could not be levelled against "the ingenious Mr. Smart" whose rhyming doublets include "fetid"/"regretted" (Psalm XXXVIII), "flagitious"/"pernicious" (Psalm XLIX), "compunction"/"conjunction" (Psalm LI), "voracious"/"rapacious" (Psalm LXXIX), "lump"/"trump" (Psalm LXXXVIII) and "dew"/"glue" (Psalm CXXXIII).

14 Watts, pp. xiv-v, xvi, xvii, xix, xxvi, xxvii.

years later than A Song to David, "predate" the latter in both language and versification.

One critic considers Smart's paraphrases to be "the real storehouse for the imagery and cadences of the Song", and suggests from "strongest internal evidence" that he "wrote many of his Psalms before the Song, and that he sat down to compose it, in a mood of ecstatic thanksgiving, with their phrases and rhythms ringing in his brain".[15] Less constructively, Fr. Devlin sees them as "an unintentional rehearsal for the Song to David", and considers it "extremely difficult" to conceive of the Psalms as other than background to the greater work.[16] Although I would question Sherbo's ordering of the Psalms as "an inevitable sequel to A Song to David; first, a song of praise to the poet-scholar of God and then a reworking of his songs in praise of God", his summation of their relationship seems essentially supportable: "Both were in his mind during the years of his confinement, and he almost surely worked at the Song and the Psalms in this same period, occasionally borrowing, consciously or unconsciously, an image or a peculiar collocation of words from one for use in

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15 Oliver Elton, A Survey of English Literature 1730-1780, 2 vols. (London, 1928), II, 85. See Arthur Sherbo, "The Probable Time of Composition of Christopher Smart's Song to David, Psalms, and Hymns and Spiritual Songs", JEGP, LV (January 1956), 41-57.

16 Poor Kit Smart, pp. 139, 138.

the other".[17]

Smart's own evidence in Jubilate Agno allows glimpses of their progress from inception to publication. Not later than 1759 he is singing "a psalm of my own composing" (Bl. 32), and later in the same year he declared that "it woud be better if the LITURGY were musically performed" (Bl. 252): an indication (reinforced by D.217, "I pray for a musician or musicians to set the new psalms") of the interdependence of verse and music in his mind. In 1760 he was suggesting that "it were better for the SERVICE, if only select psalms were read" (B2. 511), and by 1762-63 his concern had intensified as reference crowded upon reference:

> God all-sufficient bless & forward the Psalmist in the Lord Jesus.
>
> (D. 203)
>
> God forward my version of the psalms thro' Jesus Christ our Lord.
>
> (D. 208)
>
> . . . the Lord forward my translation of the psalms this year.
>
> (D. 220)
>
> I pray God bless all my Subscribers.[18]
>
> (D. 221)

On 8 September 1763 he announced from London, Proposals for Printing, by Subscription, A New Translation Of The Psalms

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17 Christopher Smart, p. 209. The Song (1763) gave notice of the Psalms and Hymns, the printer having "copy in his possession", which indicated an advanced state of preparation.

18 Smart's collection was prefaced with an impressive array of 736 subscribers, paralleled by a similar, if less discursive, list in Merrick's version.

Of David. To Which will Be Added, A Set of Hymns, For The Fasts and Festivals of The Church of England, and gave Psalms XLV and CXLVIII as specimens. Condition II of the Proposals read: "The Measure is kept up for all the old favourite Tunes; and for the new Measures, there will be New Musick composed by Dr. Boyce, Mr. Howard, and other eminent Masters, which will be published in an Appendix to the Work for such as chuse it" [p.1]. Further advertisements followed in the first edition of the Song, Poems By Mr. Smart, Poems on Several Occasions, Ode to the . . . Earl of Northumberland and Hannah, in which the author, by 1764, could note that "This Translation has met with the Encouragement of many of the Bishops and other dignified Clergymen, together with all the eminent writers of Poetry and Musick".[19] Smart's claim was undoubtedly in answer to Dr. Lowth's scholarly patronage of Merrick's rival version, which had also received the approval of "persons of very great learning and eminence".[20]

After further pre-announcement and assurances, the work finally came out on 12 August 1765, anticipated on 4 July by Merrick's version; the accompanying tunes, promised as early as 1763, appeared even later in the year, printed and published

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19 A Song to David (London, 1763), p. 22; Poems By Mr. Smart. viz. Reason and Imagination (London, [1763?]), [p. 22]; Poems on Several Occasions (London, [1763]); Ode to the . . . Earl of Northumberland (London, 1764), [p. 24]; Hannah. An Oratorio (London, [1764]), sig. C4^{v}.

20 The Psalms, Translated or Paraphrased in English Verse (Reading, 1765), p.v. Merrick was already known as a biblical expositor, poet, divine and essayist.

independently by J. Walsh, a music literature specialist (see Appendix III). This provision of musical accompaniment for new psalm paraphrases was general, and most were "fitted to the Tunes used in Churches", such as Blackmore's version, or that of Tate and Brady.[21] If, as seems likely, Smart envisaged the incorporation of his psalms and their melodies into church worship, such hope was sadly frustrated, for they were never employed by the church and only a few paraphrases were ever reprinted.[22]

As might be expected, contemporary critical reviews were either proscriptive or dismissive, for any hint of religious enthusiasm produced disquiet, and if confirmed, condemnation. The early Seatonian verses raised no major evaluative contentions; the post-asylum work, seen as the outpourings of a professed enthusiast, must, _per se_, be damned. The situation had been further exacerbated by the snippets of insinuation and retaliation printed in the _Monthly_ and _Critical Reviews_, and as Smart's inflammatory

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21 N. Tate and N. Brady, _A New Version of the Psalms of David_ (London, 1696); other poets commissioned new melodies: see concluding advertisement to Watts's _Psalms_ which announced "A Collection of TUNES fitted to Mr. _Watts's_ Imitation of the PSALMS, his Book of HYMNS, and his Divine SONGS" [n.p.]. Note _A New Version of the Psalms of David, By N. Tate and N. Brady: And set to Musick by J.Z. Triemer_ (Amsterdam, 1765).

22 See Dearnley, pp. xxvi-xxvii. One critic has suggested that "the music, combined with his verses, which are often of a high quality though diffuse and in need of pruning, might provide us with some good hymns, of which there are none too many": W. Force Stead, "Christopher Smart's Metrical Psalms", _TLS_, 22 October 1938, p. 677.

"Advertisements" in his Poems [1763?] and Poems on Several Occasions [1763]. The poet's denunciation of a "stupendous impudence against the Truth of CHRIT [sic] JESUS, who has most confidently affirmed this same DAVID to be alive in his Argument for the Resurrection",[23] though in part understandable, was hardly calculated to restore public confidence in his ability to reason. Few readers conceded, as did Mrs. Thrale, a distinction between religious fanaticism and insanity.[24]

The Monthly Review, affecting an attitude of sympathy, at least clothed its indictment in the garb of detachment: "some unhappy circumstances in this gentleman's life, seem to have given his latter writings a peculiar claim to a total exemption from criticism. Accordingly, we chuse to be silent, with regard to the merit of the present publication". No such delicacy informed the pages of its contending magazine, whose circuitous parting shot, clearly aimed at Smart, was particularly offensive: "the Psalmist is at last delivered from a crowd of wretched poets, who had overwhelmed his native grace and dignity under the rubbish of their despicable rhimes: the admirers of these beautiful compositions

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23 "Advertisement", in Poems By Mr. Smart, [1763?] p. 21. See Roland B. Botting, "Christopher Smart in London", Research Studies of the State College of Washington, VII (March 1939), 3-54.

24 See Thraliana, ed. Katharine C. Balderston, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1942), II, 728; also Hester Lynch Piozzi, British Synonymy, 2 vols. (London, 1794), II, 3-6. Fanny Burney also remarked that Smart's piety, "though rather fanatical than rational, was truly sincere": Madame D'Arblay, Memoirs of Doctor Burney, 3 vols. (London, 1832), I, 280.

may read them with pleasure in Mr. Merrick's translation".[25]

Such comment reflected personal antagonism rather than critical impartiality. If Merrick's paraphrases possessed more "dignity", "delicacy" and "elegance", they certainly hazarded fewer chances. Smart, on the other hand, struggling against the disabilities which these same critics had uncovered and reviled in his post-asylum work, was clearly open to charges of poetical and theological heterodoxy. Moreover, Merrick's psalms, "a mixture of Translation and Paraphrase", had "not been calculated for the uses of public Worship", but to "answer the purposes of private devotion".[26] Their pedantic nature was underlined by the publication, in 1768, of a three-hundred-and-forty-two-page Annotations on the Psalms which justified the author's smallest deviation from his original source. And no reviewer drew attention to the astonishing variety of metres and stanzaic forms that Smart had employed, and these included many alternative scansions.[27] In sheer

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25 "Article 21: [Review of Smart's Translation of the Psalms]", The Monthly Review, XXXIII (September 1765), 240-41 (p. 241); Critical Review, XX, 216. Apart from favourable mention by William Mason (see "On Parochial Psalmody", in Essays, Historical and Critical (York, 1795), pp. 178, 179, et passim), a duodecimo second edition in 1766, further partial eighteenth-century reprints and some settings in 1775 by William Hayes, Merrick's Psalms have been virtually forgotten.

26 The Psalms, pp. iii, vii, viii.

27 The number of psalms (including alternative versions) in each metre are as follows: 8686(35), 886886 ("Song to David metre", 31) 8787(23), 8886(21), 8666(11), 666688(6), 8888 ([iambic]6), 7777(5), 86888(4), 888888(3), 8888 ([trochaic]2), 6666(2), 6686(1), 668668(1), 10101111(1), 446446(1), 101066(1), 11111111(1), 86810(1), 886888(1), 7776(1); 21 different measures in all.

inventiveness they far surpassed the efforts of his predecessors, most of whom adhered overwhelmingly to 8686 (common) and 8888 metres.[28]

Posterity, which often reverses contemporary assessments, has not, in this instance, been favourable to Smart. Partly on account of their sheer bulk (over four hundred pages in Callan's edition),[29] and partly due to the uneven quality of the verse, Smart's Psalms have received only scant attention from commentators. And what notice they have drawn seems hardly likely to advance their reputation.[30] Taking their cue from Browning, Victorian critics restated the myth of Divine intervention to explain the excellence of the Song, since its author "during his life produced nothing else but dulness". The "spiritless effusions of a literary hack", remarked one writer, and as late as 1931 another critic considered that "No effort of kindness can

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28 Blackmore employs 6 metres, and 126 psalms are in 8686; The Psalms of David, in Metre (anal. David Dickson), appended to The Universal Bible, Two Parts (Edinburgh, 1765, 1766) styles 150 (including alternatives) in 8686; the 13 remaining psalms are in 5 additional measures; The Whole Book of Psalms by Thomas Sternhold, John Hopkins et al. (London, 1728) sets 134 psalms from 158 in 8686; Tate and Brady (A New Version (1696) utilize 6 different metres: 94 in 8686 and 37 in 8888; even Merrick (The Psalms) fits 121 psalms to 8888: the remaining 29 use only 3 other measures, and the whole is disposed overwhelmingly into rhymed couplets (129 from a total 150).

29 The Collected Poems of Christopher Smart, ed. Norman Callan, The Muse's Library, 2 vols. (London, 1949), II, 385-788.

30 Smart's daughter Mrs. Le Noir, noted of the Psalms that "few readers would labour through their thick shade to the flowers they precede and conceal": "Psalms and Religious Poems", in Miscellaneous Poems, 2 vols. (Reading, 1825-26), II, [following Miscellaneous Poems] 71.

establish any merit worth mentioning, in any other of Smart's poems".[31] Although several works have been rescued in recent years from these strictures, the "phlegmatic long-windedness" of this "huge body of uninspired and tedious versification" led Moira Dearnley to conclude: "No one is going to make any literary claims for Smart's Translation of the Psalms".[32] Certainly, at its poorest, the work abounds in generalizations and cumbrous Latinisms and shows little of the illuminative strangeness that exalts A Song to David. Smart seldom appears in what Laurence Binyon terms the "propitious state":[33] a realm of acutely heightened sensibility which seeks a correspondingly intense, visionary expression.

One hundred years earlier Thomas Hobbes had equated "divine inspiration" with delusion or poetic frenzy: "why a Christian should think it an ornament to his Poem; either to profane the true God, or invoke a false one, I can imagin no cause, but a reasonless . . . custome; by which a man enabled to speak wisely from the principles of nature, and his own meditation, loves rather to be thought to speak by

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31 ["Review of Browning's Parleyings"], The Athenaeum, No. 3095, 19 February 1887, pp. 247-49 (p. 248); R.A. Streatfeild, [sic] ed., A Song to David (London, 1901), p.5; [Ernest Benn], ed., Christopher Smart, The Augustan Books of Poetry (London, 1931), p.vi.

32 Poetry of Smart, pp. 240, 235, 245.

33 The Case of Christopher Smart, The English Association Pamphlet No. 90 (Oxford, December 1934), p. 14.

inspiration like a Bagpipe".[34] Hobbes's objections were undoubtedly justified, for, of all possible translatable sources, biblical narrative and poetry lay most open to flagrant, if unintentional, abuse. Enthusiasm, the risk of doctrinal heresy, incongruity of form and language, fanciful or visionary treatment of the text, and not least, the sheer task of providing a seasonable alternative to reflections which through the centuries had become woven into Christian ceremony, sensibility and worship: to the devotional poet these posed real and accountable difficulties.

Although A Song to David, above all, exemplified evangelical excess, the Psalms, also, suggested that "the inkhorn naiveté of early seventeenth-century diction was breaking through into the eighteenth as Smart's religion intensified to pre-Augustan enthusiasm".[35] This is particularly the case in Smart's expansive treatment of musical praise: "Let exaltation pil'd/On exaltation bless" (Psalm XXI, ll. 73-74); "And swell with all your might and main/The full resounding peal" (Psalm XXXIII, ll. 11-12); "O let your holy songs ascend/In ecstasy of praise" (Psalm CV, ll. 5-6); or from the Song:

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34 "The Answer of Mr Hobbes to Sr Will.[iam] D'Avenant's Preface Before Gondibert" (1650), in Gondibert: An Heroick Poem (London, 1651), pp. 77-78.

35 J.B. Broadbent, ed., A Song to David (Cambridge, 1960), p. xiii.

PRAISE above all — for praise prevails;
Heap up the measure, load the scales,
And good to goodness add. . . .
(st. L)[36]

If these and similar phrases epitomized that emotionalism so deplored by moderates, Bishop Robert Lowth had, in 1753, attributed effective poetic language to "vehement affections of the mind", and saw in "divine inspiration" a "style and expression directly prompted by nature itself, and exhibiting the true and express image of a mind violently agitated".[37] Nor was this a revolutionary stance, for some fifty years earlier John Dennis had proposed a complementary thesis by maintaining that poetical genius was but the embodiment of "Enthusiastick Passions". Language, syntax, versification — in short, the technical constituents of poetry — he assumed would follow a priori: "never any one, while he was rapt with Enthusiasm, wanted either Words or Harmony . . . the Expression conveys and shews the Spirit, and therefore must be produced by it".[38] The dangerous appeal of such reasoning hardly requires underlining; even Smart's well-wishers saw its consequences only too clearly:

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36 All quotations from the Song refer, by stanza number, to the second edition published in A Translation of the Psalms (1765), pp. 185-94.

37 Lectures on the Sacred Poetry of the Hebrews, trans. G. Gregory, 2 vols. (London, 1787), I, 79. Similarly, he ascribed the "actual origin of Poetry" to the "more violent affections of the heart . . .[manifest in] a vehemence of expression far removed from vulgar use" (I, 37).

38 The Advancement and Reformation of Modern Poetry (1701), in Critical Works, ed. Edward Niles Hooker, 2 vols. (Baltimore, 1939, 1943), I, 197-278 (pp. 216, 222).

> Wrapt in a Vision, he presum'd to sing
> The Attributes of Heaven's eternal King:
> But O! approaching tow'rds the Thrones of Light,
> Its flashing Splendors overpow'r'd his Sight.[39]

Doctrinal heresy was perhaps less of a cause célèbre in an age which, following the Restoration, was flooded with innumerable works of theological controversy, whose content appears even more heretical today.[40] As with Thomas Traherne writing one hundred years earlier, Smart in his poetry bears testimony to the credendum of the Affirmative Way. His Psalms, in particular, delight in a created universe which discloses the perfection of its Creator. Allied to this orthodox Deism is a Franciscan caritas, embracing each living and inanimate being and raising them to the level of Christian supernaturalism. This idea is beautifully conveyed through the mystical language of Jubilate Agno:

> For the flower glorifies God and the root
> parries the adversary.
>
> For the flowers have their angels even the
> words of God's Creation.
>
> For flowers are peculiarly the poetry of Christ.
>
> (B2. 499, 500, 506)

Indeed, as Geoffrey Grigson suggests, Smart appears to have finally endorsed a Berkeleyan view of nature which "more than

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39 John Lockman, "A Thought on reading a Bill for the acting of Meropé", The Public Advertiser, No. 7560, 30 January 1759, [p. 2].

40 See S.C. Carpenter, Eighteenth Century Church and People (London, 1959), especially pp. 25–55, 115–51; and A.S.P. Woodhouse, The Poet and His Faith (Chicago, 1965), pp. 123–59.

declaring the glory of God to the passive spectator in a direct psalmody, is joined to ourselves in our direct active perception, in which it exists concretely and brilliantly, and as a portion of divine language".[41]

Apperception of nature's inherent sanctity and goodness implies a pre-lapsarian view which banishes the inevitable consequences of the Fall. But since the book of Psalms obviously denotes a post-lapsarian world, Smart incorporated the doctrine of Divine Redemption as a theological analogue to man's paradisal state: "To Christ I my song will recite" (Psalm XIII, l.21). Natural religion and ethics were, in themselves, clearly insufficient without that grace and atonement wrought through the Immaculate Second Adam. As Smart's brief "Preface" states: "IN this translation, all expressions, that seem contrary to Christ, are omitted, and evangelical matter put in their room".[42]

Whoever would undertake a version of the Psalms, warned Isaac Watts, "let him bring with him a Soul devoted to Piety, an exalted Genius, and withal a studious Application. For David's Harp abhors a prophane Finger, and disdains to answer to an unskilfull or a careless Touch".[43] The question of mode and diction was naturally prominent in an age preoccupied

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41 Christopher Smart, Writers and their Work No. 136 (London, 1961), pp. 14-15. See also D.J. Greene, "Smart, Berkeley, the Scientists and the Poets", JHI, XIV (June 1953), 327-52. S.T. Coleridge also incorporated Berkeleyan credos into "This Lime-tree Bower my Prison" and "Frost at Midnight", especially ll. 58-62.

42 "Preface", sig. $A2^{v}$.

43 Psalms of David, pp. xxvii-xxviii.

with formulating and defining precepts for the "proper language" of poetry. Any translation of Scripture or the classics was liable to public assailment, and the eighteenth-century literary magazines invariably initiated the fray. In the case of psalm paraphrases, particularly to be deplored were those "adscititious embellishments" which "corrupt the purity, and debase the dignity of the sacred author"; yet attempts at preserving the original simplicity frequently reduced the performance to ludicrousness or contempt.[44]

Caught between these two possible approaches, Smart, as with many translators before him, chose to amplify, and in the process compromise, the biblical directness. That his poeticizing of scriptural starkness with lyrical additions places him among the "periphrasists" is clearly demonstrable:

> . . . sing ye praises with understanding.
> (Psalm 47.7)

> Let us perform our part,
> Sing vying for th'immortal prize
> In high-wrought verse and heed full wise,
> Like masters of your art.
> (Psalm XLVII, ll. 39-42)

> With trumpets also and shawms: O shew your selves joyful before the Lord the King.
> (Psalm 98.7)

> With soul-soothing shawms, in tune to the wings
> of breezes serene O temper your mirth,
> And with the shrill trumpet sound, hail King of kings,
> Thy creatures adore thee their Saviour on earth.
> (Psalm XCVIII (Alt.), ll. 21-24)

> Praise him, all ye angels of his: praise him all his host.
> (Psalm 148.2)

> Praise him, cherubic flights,
> And ye seraphic fires,
> Angelical delights
> With voices, lutes and lyres;
> And vie who shall extol him most,
> Ye blest innumerable host! (Psalm XCLVIII, ll. 7-12)

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44 Critical Review, XX, 210.

Whereas severe compression characterizes and distinguishes A Song to David, the Psalms, in general, display a degree of syntactical looseness which suggests a chronological place antecedent to the greater work.

One critic has claimed that Smart's methods of expansion "reveal techniques which did not compromise his intention by forcing unnecessary material"; that he "manages to create the required additional verses through amplification of themes which occur in the original".[45] Although this may be true of the three examples quoted above, it is only to suggest one facet of Smart's compositional technique. When he expands his original with imagery that is both imaginatively conceived and integrated, the effect can be surprisingly vivid:

> Beside them shall the fowls of the air have their habitation: and sing among the branches.
> (Psalm 104.12)

> Near them thro' blossoms bursting ripe
> The birds upon the perches pipe,
> As boughs the herbage shield;
> And while each other they salute,
> The trees from every quiv'ring shoot,
> Melodious musick yield.[46]
> (Psalm CIV, ll. 67-72)

In this instance Smart uses the Coverdale source as a thematic embryo to develop his sacramental view of nature: a symbol of God on earth and the whole of creation His sacrarium. As God's creative design underlies all the splendours of the physical universe, so the "admirable constitution of nature"

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45 Blaydes, pp. 91, 87.

46 Compare "Hymn XXXII: The Nativity of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ", ll. 29-32, from Hymns and Spiritual Songs, in A Translation of the Psalms (1765). See also page 331 in the following chapter.

testifies to His glory, wisdom and power.[47] Though not the finest of Smart's stanzas, nor fully illustrative of his concept of responsive nature, these lines are closely allied in technique and language to A Song to David. Their relative excellence, moreover, is confirmed, if compared with the parallel versions of Tate and Brady, Barton, Barclay, Burgh, Dickson, or even Merrick, beside whose accounts Smart's vignette displays considerable freshness and animation.[48]

The exigencies of rhyme and metre, however, also found expression in the devices of circumlocution, extraneous development and repetition, as well as in thematic variation. In Jubilate Agno Smart had claimed as his peculiar talent, to "give an impression upon words by punching, that when the reader casts his eye upon 'em, he takes up the image from the mould wch I have made" (B2. 404). The application of this maxim to Smart's post-asylum works is most apparent in A Song to David and in certain of the Hymns and Spiritual Songs and Hymns for . . . Children. But in the Psalms, his frequently arbitrary treatment of syntax suggests an incomplete fusion of vision and form.

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47 Lowth, Lectures, I, 177.

48 See Tate and Brady, A New Version (1696), p. 211; William Barton, The Book of Psalms in Metre (London, 1696), p. 263; John Barclay, The Psalms, Paraphrased (Edinburgh, 1776), p. 302; [James Burgh], An Hymn to the Creator of the World (London, 1750), p. 4; The Psalms, in Universal Bible, p. 30; Merrick, The Psalms, p. 256.

Nevertheless, a predilection for Latinate words,[49] and the liberality of their application should not obscure Smart's characteristic manipulation of language. Versification of Scripture was commonplace in the eighteenth century, and Smart's choice of diction does not lie totally outside the dictates of the age. His originality lies, rather, in his idiosyncratic handling of it. His effects are not derivative in the obvious sense, and unlike Gray's, they seldom invoke the familiarity of classical literary associations.[50] But his employment of language does invoke classical theory, or more specifically, it derives from the pandects and writings of Horace.

From his prose translation of 1756 and the fine poetic version of 1767, yet to be completed, Smart was completely familiar with the Horatian expressive range which included inverted word order, unfamiliar constructions and unexpected grammatical usages. In the Liber de Arte Poetica Horace had written:

> In verbis etiam tenuis, cautúsque serendis,
> Dixeris egregiè, notum si callida verbum
> Reddiderit junctura novum:

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49 A random listing might include "obnubilated" (Psalm XLVII), "benignities" (Psalm LXIII), "ante-mundane" (Psalm LXVIII), "effulgent" and "peerless pulchritude" (Psalm XCVII), "efficacious" (Psalm CXVI), "concupiscence" and "schismatics" (Psalm CXIX).

50 The St. Cecilia ode (1746) forms a notable exception.

which Smart translated as, "In the choice of words too he must be delicate and cautious; you will express yourself eminently well, if a dextrous composition (or combination) should give an air of novelty to a common word".[51] This authority provided the basis for Smart's well-known aphorism: "Impression, then, is a talent or gift of Almighty God, by which a Genius is impowered to throw an emphasis upon a word or sentence in such wise, that it cannot escape any reader of sheer good sense, and true critical sagacity"; an effect which he considered to be "far more powerful and abundant in the sacred writtings" [sic].[52] Horace also approved the renaissance of old words and the invention of new, a liberty particularly commended by Gray.[53] The Roman poet had stated: "licuit, semperque licebit, signatum praesente nota producere nomen", which Smart rendered: "It has been and ever will be, allowable to coin a word mark'd with the stamp in present request".[54] Although in the Psalms, Hebraic and Miltonic influence is as much in evidence as Horace's curiosa felicitas, Smart's peculiarities, both happy and unhappy, represent a genuine

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51 Q. Horatii Flacci, Liber de Arte Poetica (Paris, 1552), p. 27; Christopher Smart, The Works of Horace, Translated Literally into English Prose, 2nd ed., 2 vols. (1756; London, 1762), II, 383.

52 Christopher Smart, The Works of Horace, Translated into Verse, 4 vols. (London, 1767), "Preface", I, xii. On the literary relationship of Horace and Smart, see Sherbo, Christopher Smart, pp. 67-73.

53 See Correspondence of Thomas Gray, ed. Paget Toynbee and Leonard Whibley, 3 vols. (Oxford, 1935), I, 192.

54 De Arte Poetica, loc. cit.; Works of Horace (1762), II, 383, 385.

attempt at Horatian emulation.

Certainly this stated intention accounts for Smart's abrupt oscillations between pomposity and colloquialism, his arresting epithets and unconventional coinages such as "And make melodious moan" (Psalm LXVIII, l. 78). This periphrasis for "sing" which has no source in the Coverdale or Authorized texts, seems an intrusion following the image of silver-and-gold-plumed doves: an alliterative contrivance introduced merely to complete the stanzaic measure. Similarly in Psalm XCVIII, Smart's description of concerted music, which Grigson instances as one of a number of "scraps of felicity" surfacing occasionally in the Psalms,[55] seems to owe its prominence to largely superfluous elaboration:

> With trumpets also and shawms. . . .
> (Psalm 98.7)
>
> The chearful trumpet sound,
> And let the horns be wound,
> To yield thro' twisted brass their tone. . . .
> (ll. 37-39)

But these attempts embody a fundamental aspect of Smart's technique: the mingling of Hebraic forthrightness and Horatian expressive freedom within the limits of his chosen stanzaic forms.

A growing insistence throughout the eighteenth century on images rather than ideas in poetry also raised the ancillary

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55 Christopher Smart, p. 25.

concern of how best to embody figurative concepts in concrete language. In the Song, Smart is able both to propose and to incorporate abstractions successfully. In the Psalms, however, instances of this duality are rarer, though, as in Psalm CXXXVII, still discernible. The second stanza presents abstract qualities:

> No matter for our harps — our care
> Was not on mirth and musick there,
> All solace we declin'd. . . .
> (ll. 7-9)

"Care", "mirth", "musick", "solace": these terms evoke an atmosphere rather than a scene. The succeeding lines, however, concentrate this account into a pictorial statement:

> We sate and suffer'd them in view
> To hang as bended, or as blew
> The willows or the wind.
> (ll. 10-12)

The harp, formerly a resounding corollary to praise, has become a hollow emblem of suffering. Strung uselessly on the willows, it is subject only to the buffeting indifference of the winds.

Although the standard six measure is well adapted to this treatment, less distinguished attempts abound in other metres. One example will suffice. The third stanza of Psalm LXXXI opens, conversely, with a strong aural/visual image: "Blow up the trumpet, as you see/The moon's increasing rays". Its qualifying rejoiner could hardly be less concrete: "Nor bate a jot of that decree/That bids

us sing and praise". In the first example (Psalm CXXXVII), the form is controlled by the content, and there is a corresponding focusing of intensity; in the second (Psalm LXXXI), content is moulded into form, and the dramatic contrast is considerably lessened.

Smart may not, in fact, discriminate between concepts and substantiality, but merge the two into one sensory experience:

> Upon an instrument of ten strings, and upon the lute: upon a loud instrument, and upon the harp.
> (Psalm 92.3)

> Upon the decachord and lute,
> Upon the musick loud and strong,
> Grave tones accordant with acute,
> Upon the harp and song.
> (Psalm XCII, ll. 9-12)

Yet this approach is not always successful, for by following the scriptural syntax Smart's verse is wayward in a literal sense, as neither "musick" nor "song" may be acted "upon". These epithets, undistinguished as descriptions, are not well integrated; although serving the thematic design, they seem randomly applied. Again, a general statement may be qualified by an appropriate illustration:

> I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving . . .
> (Psalm 16.15)

> I will sacrifice thanksgiving,
> Swelling voice and sounding chord. . . .
> (Psalm CXVI, ll. 57-58)

This principle, though, lacks the variety, subtlety and strength of the Song, for the specific can, through indiscriminate use, become generic:

> To God your anthems frame
> With swelling voice and chord.
> (Psalm CXXXV, ll. 3–4)
>
> With the trumpet and alarm,
> Mighty hand, and stretch'd-out arm. . . .
> (Psalm CXXXVI, ll. 45–46)

In the first instance (Psalm CXXXV), Smart substitutes for reiterated, general praise, appropriately choral anthems. "Swelling" was a favourite eighteenth-century adjective to describe church music, for it conveyed both the weight of congregational worship and also the transcendent nature of song, as David's "voice of heav'n-ascending swell" (A Song to David, st. I). Yet Smart designates "anthems" ten times in the Psalms; together with "hymns" (eleven occurrences), "song(s)" (fifty-eight), "sing" and its cognates (forty-nine), these numerous appearances recall the "rites and ceremonies of the Church of England" and objectify Smart's preoccupation with choral tribute. In the second example (Psalm CXXXVI), God's mighty acts may suggest the military image of "trumpet and alarm", but no less the "stretch'd-out arm" demands its correspondent rhyme. And so the verse is completed with a common biblical doublet.

In the comparative review of Merrick and Smart already cited, the charge of poetic impropriety was directed against Smart who had introduced "a mixture of new ideas . . . thrown in for no other purpose but to fill up the measure of the verse".[56] Some translators countered possible diffuseness

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[56] Critical Review, XX, 210.

by judicious selection of material, by methodical stanzaic divisions and through use of short, regular metres which prescribed a measure of structural and thematic discipline. Smart's compositional method, though, was one of augmentation and rarely of curtailment. Plain restatement of basic biblical imagery imposed from the outset a degree of imagistic economy, but as the one verse/one stanza approach called for considerable expansion, some modification of the text was clearly necessary. Given the pedantry of this method, instances of unwarranted padding are surprisingly less frequent than images derived from the seminal source. Proceeding by way of "theme and variations": compare Psalm 119.103: "O how sweet are thy words", with Smart: "Thy words, how musically smooth,/And elegantly chaste" (ll. 614-15); parallelism — in Hebraic poetry a structural, and not an expressive, device — ("Your hymns of thanks rehearse,/Your songs of exultation swell" (Psalm XCVIII, ll. 29-30); "Let ev'ry thought be rais'd,/And ev'ry note be new" (Psalm CXLIX, ll. 3-4); and kaleidoscopic shifts in emphasis, Smart elaborates the associative possibilities inherent in any one scriptural verse.

Robert Brittain, citing the large quantity of evangelical matter in Smart's Psalms, suggests two main methods of amplification: that of presenting the core image in as striking a context as the verse form allows, and the "introduction of images and figures not in the original text nor even necessarily implied but which yet fit into the

general effect", their selection being determined by "the nature of his [Smart's] subject rather than for the wording of the individual verse of his text".[57] Although these latter embellishments are not always strongly conceived, this does not imply a corresponding lack of theological vision, for from such insights derive many of Smart's more subtle variations. And notwithstanding the nominative "I" of Holy Scripture, Smart's personal involvement is unmistakeable; he creates a work which reflects his own devotional predilections, as well as those of the Psalmist.[58]

This self-identification is especially apparent in passages that express the intense commitment of vocal worship:

> And raise my voice with all my might
> Thy wond'rous works to bless;
> (Psalm XXVI, ll. 27-28)
>
> And still with eager lips reveal
> Th'internal gratitude I feel,
> And zeal to praise with which I burn.
> (Psalm XXXIV, ll. 3-5)
>
> And to thy name the praise repay,
> And thine immortal worth display,
> Nor ever from the theme depart.
> (Psalm CXLV, ll. 8-10)

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57 Poems by Smart, pp. 280, 283.

58 Critics have also drawn parallels between Smart's circumstances and the Psalmist's "jeopardy". Many of the petitionary songs, as Psalm 22, thereby acquire a heightened emotional force.

In Jubilate Agno he had prayed: "The Lord magnify the idea of Smart singing hymns on this day in the eyes of the whole University of Cambridge" (D. 148), and sundry allusions in the Psalms presuppose an assumed precentorship which reinforces the madhouse prayer:

> I will dwell in thy tabernacle for ever. . .
> (Psalm 61.4)
>
> I will within thy temple dwell
> And there for ever sing;
> There likewise all the choir compell,
> (Psalm LXI, ll. 16-18)
>
> But it is good for me to hold me fast by God. . .
> (Psalm 73.27)
>
> But it is good for me to hold
> My service and my song,
> (Psalm LXXIII, ll. 105-6)
>
> [no source]
>
> Amen from him that holds his place
> To lead the choir in song.
> (Psalm LXXXIX, ll. 203-4)
>
> [no source]
>
> And in such harmony combin'd
> I likewise will the chorus swell.
> (Psalm CXLV, ll. 29-30)

Whether the embodiment of Smart's theology allows the Psalms to be called "Christian meditations suggested by a reading of the Psalter" is dubious. Nor can they be considered "virtually original compositions",[59] for those passages which

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59 Brittain, ed., pp. 285, 279.

are wholly Smart's are neither consistent nor sustained. What ultimately stultifies the work is the rigidity of the Old Testament progressions which denies Smart those contrasts of cosmic splendour and intimate natural communion that are among his distinguishing poetic characteristics. For evidence of these the reader must look primarily to A Song to David.

CHAPTER EIGHT PSALMS II

> Yea, I will take none other theme
> For musick than thy word supreme ...[1]

The theological background, stylistic influences and general reception of Smart's Psalms having been considered, it is necessary to look to the musical imagery itself. Far from existing as an independent entity, it helps to define the nature of the poet's religious convictions, incorporates several important seventeenth- and eighteenth-century musical ideologies, and illustrates both the perils and the potentialities inherent in poetic paraphrases. The thematic strengths of Smart's poetry moreover, particularly the relationship of music, gratitude and adoration, are clearly revealed in the Psalms, which form an integral part of his chronology of praise. A study of these relationships, besides assigning some intrinsic merit to the Psalms themselves, may relegate the Victorian idealization of the Song's origin to fancy, and assist in establishing the nature of Smart's poetic development.

As numerous eighteenth-century treatises would imply, the aesthetic conjunction of poetry and music as "sister arts" was founded primarily on structural and stylistic parallels which may be divided into three categories:

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[1] Psalm CXIX, ll. 1027-28. All quotations are from the 1765 edition.

1. Technical and formal. (The verbal "matter" of poetry was said to correspond to the harmony of music; the subject or story, to the melody; the meter, to the measure.)

2. Imitative. (In the choral works of Bach and Handel, the voices rise, with the mention of hills, descend with the valleys. Bach's "Clavier-piece" ["Capriccio, sopra la lontananza del suo fratello diletissimo"] imitates a post-horn and in Mozart's Marriage of Figaro horns express cuckoldry.) [2]

3. Expressive. (Music expresses clashes of passions — joy, grief, love. "To imitate the passions was to describe them in music; the pleasure of music was the pleasure of the passions themselves.") [3]

Although contrivances of the second kind were most notable,[4] Robert Brittain suggests that Smart's compositional technique parallels musical counterpoint; the distribution of word or image to serve both primary and secondary meanings resembles a musical subject, which complete in itself, may support a countersubject or form the harmonic basis for four-or-five-part writing. Brittain also notes that the characteristic Smartian "melody line" is a compact, pithy phrase, seldom extending over two lines of lyric verse, or into a succeeding stanza.[5] The

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2 Taken to extremes, musical imitation of this kind offered little scope for subtle effects; note Thomas Morley, A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke, introd. Edmund M. Fellowes (1597; London: Shakespeare Association Facsimilies No. 14, 1937), p.178. See Herbert M. Schueller, "'Imitation' and 'Expression' in British Music Criticism in the 18th Century", Musical Quarterly, XXXIV (October 1948), 544-66.

3 William K. Wimsatt Jr. and Cleanth Brooks, Literary Criticism: A Short History (New York, 1957), p.274.

4 Note Charles Avison, An Essay on Musical Expression (London, 1752), which condemns as trivial many of the purely imitative devices of music.

5 Poems by Smart, pp. 73, 67-68.

nature of a versified psalm or hymn would certainly account for this feature, for terminal punctuation in Smart's version invariably corresponds with the conclusion of a scriptural verse. Disposition of material as "counterpoint" is most apparent in A Song to David and the Hymns and Spiritual Songs. Notwithstanding the constraints of translation, however, instances may also be discovered in the Psalms.

In essence, Smart treats several biblical verses as a whole, and unifies them through intermittent phrases or even words, which in turn suggest auxiliary passages and themes. This complex cross-reference of meaning upon meaning is analogous to the sophisticated fugal writing of Bach, wherein the convergence of subject and countersubject, compounded by devices of augmentation, diminution and inversion, assails the ear with a myriad of inter-related musical passages.

The opening verses of Psalm XIX which chronicle God's revelation through the heavens, furnish an apt illustration. Adopting the Song to David metre as befits the subject of praise, Smart amplifies his scriptural text by reference to music of the spheres, a concept all but discarded by contemporary science. Its introduction, nevertheless, invests the biblical verses with a metaphysical aura, intensifying the motif of a cosmos which vocally declares the glory of its Creator. The diurnal cycle is balanced in the chiming nocturnal succession, both of which "revolve" around early morning matins. Moving in musical rotation,

their "melodious vespers" re-echo throughout the universe, and evoke a responsive hymn of praise. Within this three-stanza framework (lines 7-24), by repeatedly alluding to fragments already "sounded", Smart establishes a counterpoint independent of metrical division. Sweet "harmony" (l.9) forms both a literary and a musical theme, and is represented by night chiming in consonance to night (l.10), and through the warbling vespers (ll. 17-18) infused with God's harmonious Spirit. The "soothing symphanies" [sic] — a "harmony of mingled sounds"[6] — and "sweet notes" of stanza four complete the sequence by recalling Smart's primary image: "Sweet are the numbers and the times/That fill their annual sum" (ll. 11-12).

Into this thematic progression the poet also introduces particular references to Christian worship: "early prayer" (l.8), "first mattins" (l.14), "melodious vespers" (l.17) and anthems of praise (ll. 22-23). And significantly, these three verses are placed within the context of God's ubiquitous presence as revealed "In heav'n and all the clust'ring spheres" (l.2). Smart's use of parallelism emphasizes that the universe itself is held in harmonious balance: "Day tells to day"/ "To night the night"; "There is no nation, clime or tongue"/ "There is no language, sound or speech"; and in the fourth stanza: "Isle, continent or main". God's faithfulness is blazoned in symphonies which, "O'er spacious nature are the

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6 Johnson, Dictionary, s.v. Symphony.

same"; His omnipresence is expressed through the annual and diurnal cycles. Distinctive as these sub-themes are, they reiterate Smart's concept of universal praise, and are drawn together into a unified composition.

The recurrent harp motif of Psalm CXXXVII functions in a similar manner. Particularization of the instrument in Smart's second stanza is succeeded by more elaborate description ("Israel's harp and hands") in the fourth, the art of performance ("To touch the strings") in the fifth, and by an unexpected syntactical shift, verbalized ("and harp on her") in the sixth. Alliterative couplets compound the effect — "mirth and musick" (l.8); "sate and suffer'd" (l.10); "bended"/"blew" (l.11); "willows"/"wind" (l.12); "harp and hands" (l.22) — and the triplet "When most my might in mirth!" (l.36) recalls "mirth and musick" of four stanzas previous.

Counterpoint, then, may operate on organic, imagistic or linguistic levels, and indeed, may combine elements of all three possibilities. Smart's working through structure with counterpoint exemplifies, in fact, one analogy of poetry and music which eighteenth-century theorists were anxious to re-establish. Daniel Webb suggested that poet and musician were striving for comparable effects because of the affinities of textual organization existing within their different media.[7] Joshua Reynolds in his Discourses on

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[7] See Observations on the Correspondence Between Poetry and Music (London, 1769). The following discussion is based partly on John M. Alexander's article, "'Ut Musica Poesis' in Eighteenth-Century Aesthetics", English Miscellany, XXIV (1973-74), 129-51.

Art ceded a greater similitude between these two arts than between painting and poetry, since the former pair displayed a temporal and sequential, as opposed to spatial and immutable, relationship of context to form.[8] But, as might be expected, discussions founded on the technical correspondences between the sister arts— ut musica poesis — also raised aesthetic questions which were less readily defined. Reynolds saw music and poetry as appealing "directly to the imagination, without the intervention of any kind of imitation".[9] In this he recalled Burke, who assumed the superiority of speech over painting, since "words affect the mind more than the sensible image"; as with sound, he argued that abstraction and suggestion excited the intellect, whereas the visual arts through static representation, only satisfied.[10]

These and similar views anticipated nineteenth-century music criticism, particularly that of the notable German Romanticists E.T.A. Hoffmann and W.H. Wackenroder, though structuralist observations continued to be made throughout the preceding years: "What Thought is to the arrangement of words, the Key [Key System or Tonality], or the fundamental Tone, is to the arrangement of Sounds; and as the one constitutes a whole in language, by establishing a certain

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8 The Works of Sir Joshua Reynolds, ed. Edmond Malone, 2 vols. (London, 1797); see "Discourse VIII", in I, 166, and "Discourse XIII", in I, 276-78. Note also James Harris, A Discourse on Music, Painting, and Poetry, in Three Treatises, 2nd ed. (1744; London, 1765), pp.49-103.

9 "Discourse XIII", in Works, I, 285.

10 [Edmund Burke], A Philosophical Enquiry into . . . the Sublime and Beautiful (London, 1757), p.182.

and definite idea, to which all the words in a sentence bear a relation, so the other constitutes a whole in Music, by establishing a definite and leading Sound, to which all the other Sounds in the series bear a similar relation".[11] But as this technique of counterpoint was dependent on Smart's being able to organize and amplify material with a certain degree of freedom, it is therefore appropriate, at this point, to consider the implications of his methods of translation, some of which — "theme and variations", parallelism, associative shifts in emphasis — have already received some attention in the previous chapter.

Smart's Grub Street apprenticeship, deplorable in many obvious respects, at least required him to cultivate a facility in scansion and rhyme which seldom faltered throughout his entire literary career. Clear evidence that he was intrigued with the balance, quality and "ring" of words and phrases may be deduced from his earliest works, from the later Horatian translations, and in the gnomic utterances of Jubilate Agno: "For every word has its marrow in the English tongue for order and for delight" (B2. 597). The multi-syllabic rhyme (as "licentious"/"contentious", "elocution"/"retribution", "noviciate"/"officiate", "harmonious"/"symphonious"; all taken from Psalm LXXI) recalls Smart's inventiveness in lighter pieces, particularly the fables. Similarly, the alliterative

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11 Archibald Alison, Of the Sublimity and Beauty of the Material World, in Essays on . . . Taste (Edinburgh, 1790), p.180.

doublets characteristic of the Seatonian poems and Hymn are reproduced profusely in the Psalms some ten years later:[12] "melody and mirth" (Psalm XXXIV, l. 60), "Thy service and thy song" (Psalm XLV, l. 47), "sing and shout" (Psalm XLVII, l. 4), "harp and hand" (Psalm XLIX, l. 15) and the ingenious, if extravagant lines:

> O God, to praise or pray'r;
> And mirth and melody are mute
> In darkness and despair.
> (Psalm CXV, ll. 66-68)

His method of linking nouns in groups of three — "With voices, lutes and lyres" (Psalm CXLVIII, l. 10) — appeared as early as 1748 in Smart's contribution to the Gratulatio dedicated to George II. Not only do these triplets qualify, but they may also balance syntactically. "There is no language, sound or speech", for instance, forms the sense correspondent of "There is no nation, clime or tongue" (Psalm XIX, ll. 16, 13): "language"/"nation", "sound"/"clime", "speech"/"tongue" — a device especially characteristic of A Song to David. In combination with parallelism and Smart's expansion by variation technique, these linguistic features impart to the Psalms a measure of order and design. In particular, those psalms in the Song to David metre display the swing and sweep of vision that distinguishes Smart's greatest lyric:

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12 Note Jubilate Agno, B2. 600-2:

> For the relations of words are in pairs first.
> For the relations of words are sometimes in oppositions.
> For the relations of words are according to their distances from the pair.

Raise pealing anthems, and again
The pealing anthems raise.
(Psalm XLVII, ll. 35-36)

Awake, and be thy strains renew'd,
Thou glory of my gratitude,
Awake, my harp, and play —
Awake, my lute —
(Psalm CVIII, ll. 7-10)

The best and boldest blast be blown
From trumpet of triumphant tone. . . .[13]
(Psalm CL, ll. 13-14)

The sustained and regular ictus of Smart's translations which displays his innate excellence in, and control of, rhythm, might suggest, also, an acquaintance with Hebrew poetry and music. Sherbo notes that Smart drew a Hebrew lexicon from Pembroke College Library at least once, around 1746, and this implies the poet's interest in, and more probably a reasonable familiarity with, the language.[14] Indisputably, the primum mobile of the two Hebraic arts was rhythmical: "No one can deny that they [the Hebrews] had melody; but rhythm played a more prominent part than melody or harmony. Their love for strong accentuation and rhythm is exemplified in ancient Hebrew Poetry, which was accentual; while the poetry of the Greeks, in contrast was quantitative".[15] Even in

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13 The explosive "b's" and heraldic "t's" in this couplet exemplify what Edmund Blunden terms the elucidation of meaning through beauty of "word-music": A Song to David with Other Poems (London, 1924), p.99.

14 Christopher Smart, p.42; see Charles Parish, "Christopher Smart's Knowledge of Hebrew", Studies in Philology, LVIII (July 1961), 516-32.

15 Sol Baruch Finesinger, "Musical Instruments in the Old Testament", Hebrew Union College Annual, III (1926), 21-76 (p.23); note also Theodore H. Robinson, The Poetry of the Old Testament (London, 1947), pp.11-46, and W.O.E. Oesterley, ed., The Psalms (1939; rpt. London, 1953), pp.20-33.

translation this regularity is discernible: regularity which in performance was reinforced by the pulse of musical accompaniment. As the Hebraic clauses were organized into couplets in which sense answered sense, thought and meaning were thereby balanced in rhythm and harmony. Indeed, even similar sounding words disposed in parallel sequence could generate a strong metrical cadence. Smart's assimilation of this principle is most apparent in Jubilate Agno, and is clearly set out in his catalogue of the assonantal and alliterative qualities of musical instruments (B2. 584-96).

Although Smart's Psalms lack the consistently bold contrasts of panoramic and personal, animate and inanimate, physical and metaphysical, which distinguish and sustain A Song to David, key biblical images none the less recall, in translation, his preoccupation with praise. In Psalm 19, for instance, the latter part of verse four ("and their words into the ends of the world") is rendered:

> And their sweet notes, as on the wing,
> The constancy of God they sing,
> To farthest earth pertain.
> (11. 22-24)

The poet's sacramental theme of "designed being" is stated on a cosmic scale; the universe, itself ordered and directed by God, resounds with the steadfastness of His creation, expressed through perceptible and imperceptible (or spiritual) music.

Again, in Psalm 104, verse twelve ("Beside them shall

the fowls of the air have their habitation: and sing among the branches") is turned in a manner which fuses seemingly opposed static and active elements:

> Near them thro' blossoms bursting ripe
> The birds upon the perches pipe,
> As boughs the herbage shield. . . .
> (ll. 67-69)

The image of burgeoning blossoms is paralleled by that of birdsong, rising, apparently, from the gently-shading branches. But through an unexpected linguistic sequence ("bursting", "pipe", "quiv'ring") the trees relinquish their passive role and are absorbed into one picture of animated nature. They pulsate with life so that the antiphonal birdsong seems to come from the boughs themselves:

> And while each other they salute,
> The trees from every quiv'ring shoot,
> Melodious musick yield.
> (ll. 70-72)

A strong controlling factor in Smart's expansion of imagery is that of contrast within harmony, for the variousness of creation calls forth a corresponding range of praiseful responses: "Grave tones accordant with acute" (Psalm XCII, l. 11); "Lord, all thy works thy laud include,/The vocal and the mute" (Psalm XCLV, ll. 46-47).[16] If this antithesis is applied only within one image, the restrictions of a closely worked

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16 The unique characteristics of the creatures that appear in Fragment A and the "Let" verses of 81 (Jubilate Agno), are presented in illustration of this theme.

adaptation should not be discounted. Elsewhere, by constantly re-orientating the reader's expectations Smart provides an entrée into the behaviour of ordinary beings and phenomena, which culminates in the conviction that all modes of activity participate in the universal praise of God.

> Let all things that have breath to breathe
> From heav'n above, from earth beneath,
> To Christ's renown repair;
> (ll. 31-33)

wrote the poet in Psalm CL; and again: "Sing praises all degrees and ranks" (Psalm XCLVII, l. 37). And so, chiming spheres, soaring birds, dancing pairs, resounding instruments and angelic hosts succeed one another with scarcely a pause. The implication is clear: that all matter, both corporeal and astral, joins in one chorus of praise.

The book of Psalms is, nominally, a work of adoration. Its Hebrew title Tehillim or Sepher Tehillim translates as "Praises" or "Book of Praises"; together with Tephilloth or "Prayers" (applicable to a number of the hymns) these terms convey its essential nature: that is, devotion and praise. Not surprisingly, these two concerns find a parallel in Smart's immediate literary and biographical circumstances. As his obsession with prayer and praise was given poetic form in the Psalms, Hymns and Song to David, in the same manner it was reflected in his personal trials. In deep despair or extreme fervour he would pray; in moments of

collected quietude his apparent awareness of Grace would resolve itself into a joyful Benedicite. And if, in Smart's "List of Contents" to A Song to David, stanzas L and LI alone are given to "The transcendent virtue of praise and adoration", this dedication, applied generally, expresses the intention underlying his complete religious canon.[17]

Moreover, the inter-relationship of prayer and praise is reinforced when Smart ascribes to praise an emotional rather than an intellectual origin, for God's Holy Spirit sanctifies soul and voice alike:

> And from a faithful heart and frank
> The song of praise produce;
> (Psalm XVIII, ll. 296-97)
>
> And sing, adoring, as ye kneel,
> (Psalm XXXIII, l. 10)
>
> UNCEASING thanks, as thus I kneel,
> I will to God return;
> (Psalm XXXIV, ll. 1-2)
>
> From your hearts your voices swell
> (Psalm XCV, l. 2)
>
> Yea, I will take none other theme
> For musick than thy word supreme,
> Upon my heart or tongue;
> (Psalm CXIX, ll. 1027-29)
>
> HALLELUJAH! kneel and sing
> Praises to the heav'nly king. . . .
> (Psalm CXLVIII (Alt.), ll. 1-2)

The implicit connection is made explicit in Psalm CIV: "To thee, O Lord, will I rejoice/In melody of thought" (ll. 203-4).

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17 The word "praise" and its cognates occur, by my count, 189 times in Smart's Psalms alone.

Prayer not only overflows into praise, but is, itself, music, since it derives from the same "inspiring" source. As overwhelming love bursts spontaneously into active worship — "Ye jocund harpers, kneel,/As you the impulse feel" (Psalm XCVIII, ll. 31-32) — similarly, music is the natural expression of inner commitment. Its "divinity", although embodied in the Psalmist's concerted praise, Smart shows to arise from inner joy, when "each good heart is warm" (Psalm CXLVII, l. 3); and so "renew'd", "all the rites of gratitude/Are rapture to perform" (Psalm CXLVII, ll. 4-6).

"In voice and spirit sing and shout", wrote Smart in Psalm XLVII (l. 4), as if recalling St. Paul's vow, "I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also".[18] For, as mystical writers have always emphasized, God has appointed a purer, more quiescent form of worship whereby man "may also sing without voice, the mind resounding inwardly. For we sing, not to men, but to God, who can hear our hearts and enter into the silences of our minds".[19] Again, according to Philo, "it is not possible genuinely to express our gratitude to God by means of . . . sacrifices . . . Nay, it must be expressed by means of hymns of praise, and these

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18 1 Corinthians 14.15; also Ephesians 5.19: "singing and making melody in your heart to the LORD", and Colossians 3. 16: "singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord". Note Jubilate Agno, B1.239: "For the VOICE is from the body and the spirit — and is a body and a spirit".

19 St. John Chrysostom, "From the Exposition of Psalm XLI", in Oliver Strunk, ed., Source Readings in Music History (London, 1952), p.70.

not such as the audible voice shall sing, but strains raised and re-echoed by the mind too pure for eye to discern".[20] And St. Ambrose particularized the Psalter as the means by which "the sweetness of celestial music [might] re-echo on earth. As lyre-players are said to sing internally, so we should sing the Psalms".[21] Although Smart glorified his Maker heartily and often, he also linked exterior appearance with inward reality, recognizing in every physical, tangible act, its inner, spiritual correlative.[22] Hence in Psalm CXXXVII, his version of the Psalmist's self-imprecation encompasses interior understanding and practical art:

> . . . let my right hand forget her cunning.
> (Psalm 137. 5)
>
> May this right hand, and God's own heart
> Forget his spirit, and her art
> To touch the strings at all!
> (ll. 28-30)

The song of the mouth equates with the unheard song of the heart; together they reflect man's communion with the Divine, since God's Spirit infuses both thought and deed: "And with him in my heart commun'd/Which harmoniz'd my tongue" (Psalm LXVI, ll. 59-60). As Christ is "the source of holy song"

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20 Concerning Noah's Work as a Planter (De Plantatione), XXX. 126, in Philo, trans. F.H. Colson and Rev. G.H. Whitaker, Loeb Classical Library, 10 vols. (London, 1929-62), III (1930), 277.

21 Explanatio Psalmorum XII, quoted in James Hutton, "Some English Poems in Praise of Music", English Miscellany, II (1951), 1-63 (p.15).

22 The Book of Common Prayer defines sacrament as "an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace": "A Catechism", p.37.

(Psalm XCVIII, l. 3), so His abiding presence remains "the spirit of my song" (Psalm CXVIII, l. 80); and God's desire for "heart-directed songs" (Psalm CXXXII, l. 83) represents, above all, a longing for music that signals an attitude of total self-giving.

That Christian commitment positively demands the tribute of praise, then, is unquestionable, for all thankfulness overflows spontaneously into song.[23] Moreover, it is in the act of being worshipped that God communicates His presence to humankind. Veneration is not a detached token of human incumbence, but a positive response to the mercies of Divine intervention: "I therefore will my Saviour thank" (Psalm XVIII, l. 295); "And grateful songs to God combine" (Psalm XXX, l. 14); "Such mercies in my mouth inspire/A song of new delight" (Psalm XL, ll. 9-10). Because God answers the needs of His suppliants: "While my lips in exultation/Bless the sure effects of pray'r" (Psalm LXIII, ll. 23-24), man's only possible response is to be suspended in a perpetual state of gratitude.

Praise, prayer and gratitude all associated with music:

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23 Note Jubilate Agno, C.69: "For I prophecy that they [Christians] will learn to take pleasure in glorifying God with great cheerfulness".

these themes are inherent to the biblical psalms and basic to the Christian enactment of ritual and celebration, and Smart has applied them to his own expressive purpose. Patricia Spacks, analyzing A Song to David, suggests that as part of the "unity of all experience", praise, prayer and gratitude may claim "a direct spiritual orientation", since they "represent conscious rather than unconscious praise of God".[24] In the Psalms, wherever the Coverdale version implies a reason for thanksgiving, Smart invariably states it:

> O Sing unto the Lord a new song . . .
>
> Shew yourselves joyful unto the Lord, all ye lands: sing, rejoyce and give thanks.
> (Psalm 98. 1,5)

> O Frame the strains anew,
> Your grateful natures shew
> To Christ, the source of holy song;
>
> And to the Lord your gladness tell,
> For such a blest reverse
> Your hymns of thanks rehearse,
> Your songs of exultation swell.
> (Psalm XCVIII, ll. 1-3, 27-30)

More compelling than conscious praise, Smart's enthusiasm dictates compulsive praise that far surpasses the bounds of Christian duty. And something of the radiance of this personal commitment is reflected in Psalm CXLV:

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[24] The Poetry of Vision (Cambridge, Mass., 1967), p.133.

I will acknowledge day by day
Thy grace with thankful heart;
And to thy name the praise repay,
And thine immortal worth display,
Nor ever from the theme depart.
(ll. 6-10)

Smart's Translation of the Psalms also admits auxiliary ideas independent of his original, which can be divided into two main classes:

1. Theological. These are mostly related to the Christianization design, and support the "prophetic" theory: namely, that the Psalms are oracular and prefigure their own fulfilment in the New Testament. Psalm XLVII, for instance, incorporates an account of Christ's Ascension.

2. Metaphysical. This more extensive category includes, for the purposes of this thesis, concepts such as universal harmony, the body as instrument, and tuning of the soul. Although occasionally discernible in the book of Psalms and developed by Christian expositors, these subjects were largely formalized by secular philosophy.

Concerning the succession of New to Old Testaments, it is important to recall that Christ's redemptive mission (which instituted the concept of individual acceptability before God), also realized the heraldic utterances of Isaiah and the pleas for personal deliverance embodied in the Psalms. Smart's translations not only construe allusions which belong to Christianity proper, (that is, Christ-centred revelation), but also retain notions relative to the original Psalms, and rooted in the traditional piety of the Jewish people.

Perhaps Smart's simplest theological change is his explicit substitution of "Christ" in place of the more general Jaweh of the Hebraic psalm. "Sing praise . . . unto our God" becomes "Sing praises with your lips and lives/To Christ the word and tune" (Psalm CXLVII, ll. 41-42); or "unto thee, O LORD, will I sing" is restated: "And I will consecrate the strain/To Christ's triumphant sway" (Psalm CI, ll. 3-4). More distinctive is his evangelical interpretation of Old Testament injunctions: "that I may go unto the altar of God" becomes "O God my God, that I may go/With joy and gladness to my pray'rs" (Psalm XLIII, ll. 13-14); or the abstract "for he is thy Lord God, and worship thou him" is paraphrased, "Thy service and thy song employ/In Christ thy God and theme" (Psalm XLV, ll. 47-48).

This assured belief, which focuses scriptural thought more precisely, also transforms jarring, retributive sentiments. Renewal of faith and not damnation is sought for those alienated from communion. In Psalm CXLIX, attitudes of worship and honour displace the Hebrew antithetic positioning of worship and vengeance; the gesture of uplifted hands symbolizes prayer, the offering of the heart:[25]

> Let the praises of God be in their mouth: and a two-edged sword in their hands.
>
> (Psalm 149. 6)

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25 Note Lamentations 3.41, and Smart's interpretation of Psalm 63.4: "Lifted hands and bended knee" (Psalm LXIII, l.20).

> Let hymns, of praise compos'd
> In mirth and mystic skill,
> To God began and clos'd,
> Their mouths with musick fill,
> And as they modulate their psalms,
> Their hands present triumphant palms.
> (Psalm CXLIX, ll. 31-36)

In Psalm LXVI blood offerings are rejected for the "sacrifice of praise" or for what Smart terms "Love's unpolluted proofs" (Psalm LXIX):

> I will offer unto thee fat burnt-sacrifices, with the incense of rams: I will offer bullocks and goats.
> (Psalm 66. 13)

> And hymns and anthems serve the turn
> Of kidlings and of beeves.
> (Psalm LXVI, ll. 51-52)

The biblical shouts of praise are invariably qualified in devotional terms— "By hearty melody devout,/And hymns to God ascend" (Psalm XLVII, ll. 5-6) — and the Israelite people metamorphosed into a Christian assembly: "Yea, let all congregations join/When such a song is sung" (Psalm LXVII, ll. 11-12).

Finally, the Promised Land is not inherited in a spirit of passivity or meekness, for, as Smart notes, "all their stock resides/'Midst ceaseless hymns and pray'rs" (Psalm XXXVII, ll. 119-20): prayers for continuance of God's gracious favour, and perpetual song to honour that bounty which is the sign of His favour. The pilgrimage of life is thus a pilgrimage of praise, each new day evoking from the righteous songs of melody and mirth. Whereas the afflicted

seek comfort in prayer, the thankful dedicate themselves through "hymns and festive psalms" (Psalm CXLVII, l. 72), the traditional concomitants of Christian worship. As J.B. Broadbent suggests, those whom God has chosen, "manifest their transcendence of the Fall . . . by acting their gratitude in praise, and enjoying its fruit, serenity".[26]

In the highest station of all, man's attunement to God is expressed through unceasing musical tribute:

> With thee their spirits shall commune,
> And always praising, sing and tune
> Their holy harps and odes.
> (Psalm LXXXIV (Alt.), ll. 22-24)

Because Smart was intrigued with the heavenly hierarchy, anticipating Blake in his fascination with angelic forces, he includes the "never-failing gratitude" of God's "saints elect" (Psalm CXLV, ll. 48, 49) in his catalogue of praise. His engrossment in angelology similarly accounts for the introduction of "Cherubs that the trumpet blow,/And Seraphims that sing" (Psalm LXXXVII, ll. 38-39), and for his frequent references to celestial choruses:

> . . . the Lord shall rejoice in his works.
> (Psalm 104. 31)

> The Lord shall heav'ns whole choir employ
> In anthems of exceeding joy
> To see his works advance.
> (Psalm CIV, ll. 184-86)

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26 A Song to David (Cambridge, 1960), p.xvi.

Angelic presence is also manifest in public worship, for "pious churchmen" and "congregated angels" (Psalm CXI, ll. 5, 6) fill the church on earth, just as God's saints above "with heav'n-assisted voice/Shall in exalted hymns rejoice" (Psalm CXXXII, ll. 101-2). As Smart states in his "Hymn XVI: Trinity Sunday", "Man, soul and angel join/To strike up strains divine" (ll. 25-26); through the common act of tuneful reverencing, "men with songs thy truth shall hail,/Connecting earth with heav'n above" (Psalm CXLV, ll. 34-35).

Smart's assimilation of basically Pythagorean concepts of numerology and harmony (both mortal and supernal) was clearly modified by a contemporary Christian understanding of music. In the Psalms this spiritualizing centred on the nature of praise and its relationship to Christian ceremony. Smart's brief "Preface", besides indicating his theological design, points, indirectly, to a moral optimism which delighted in expressions of man's homage to God. Accordingly, many of his additions elaborate the implied existence of hymnody within human institutions:

> I will sing in holy metre
> Of thy righteousness alone.
> (Psalm LXXI, ll. 55-56)
>
> O swell an anthem sweet and strong,
> (Psalm XCVI, l. 3)
>
> To God your anthems frame
> With swelling voice and chord.
> (Psalm CXXXV, ll. 3-4)
>
> But mirth shall dedicate her day
> To hymns and festive psalms.
> (Psalm CXLVII, ll. 71-72)

The church on earth is rendered "The house of pray'r and song" (Psalm XLV, l. 64), and its joyful inhabitants spend their days "In thankful psalmody to tell/Of transport without end" (Psalm XXIII (Alt.), ll. 35-36). Nor is this solely an individual response. On one level Smart may refine the generic "praise" into a more personal expression of devotion as the suppliant enacts portions of the Divine service; on another, he sees in the charismatic nature of praise an impetus to corporate worship:

> Amen from all the throng;
> Amen from him that holds his place
> To lead the choir in song.
> (Psalm LXXXIX, ll. 202-4)

It being God's purpose, as an early writer states, that "the music should resound, the Spirit inspire, and the temple receive its Lord",[27] there remains the question of sacred music itself. To what expressive medium, if any, should this hymnody conform? The emergence of oratorio, especially Handel's settings of Scripture as performed in theatres, had been attended with some controversy. William Cowper, for instance, writing some forty years after its first appearance in 1742, attacked "Messiah's eulogy, for Handel's sake!", and considered that

> [the] most holy book from whom it came
> Was never meant, was never us'd before,
> To buckram out the mem'ry of a man.[28]

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27 Clement of Alexandria, The Exhortation to the Greeks, trans. G.W. Butterworth, Loeb Classical Library (London, 1919), p.13.

28 The Task, A Poem, in Six Books (London, 1785), Book VI: "The Winter Walk at Noon", ll. 637, 650-52. Note also John Newton, Messiah. Fifty Expository Discourses, on . . . the Subject of the celebrated Oratorio of Handel, 2 vols. (London, 1786).

As distinct from oratorio, the merits of purely church music had also, in fact, been debated throughout the previous century. In particular, those sermons preached on St. Cecilia's Day offered scope for the vindication of vocal and instrumental forces in Christian worship.[29]

The book of Psalms is well-documented in the nature and use of vocal and instrumental accoutrements to praise. That music was, moreover, integral to performance is revealed by the sub-titles designating chants or musical combinations, the exact meaning of which remains largely obscure. Most eighteenth-century commentators merely cited the authorities of Josephus, Michaelis, Houbigant, Martin Geier (Commentarius in Psalmos Davidis) and others. But they were forced to admit that "the musical instruments . . . are unknown to us at present; and though some have pretended to describe them, yet as the accounts of various authors are as different and as various as the authors themselves, we may safely conclude, that they are unknown to the present age".[30] Early Christian

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29 See Nicholas Brady, Church-Musick Vindicated (London, 1697), and S. Estwick, The Usefulness of Church-Musick (London, 1696), in Augustan Reprint Society Publications No. 49 (California, 1955).

30 The Universal Bible, Two Parts (Edinburgh, 1765, 1766), p.756. William Green states similarly that "the learned are not agreed what Instruments these were": A New Translation of the Psalms (Cambridge, 1762), p.v. More recent and more illuminative studies include John Stainer, The Music of the Bible (London, [1879]); Carl Engel, The Music of the Most Ancient Nations (London, 1864), pp. 280-311; Curt Sachs, The History of Musical Instruments (London, 1942), pp. 105-27; and Finesinger, "Musical Instruments in the Old Testament".

writers were also far from unanimous in their understanding of Hebraic musical references. Clement of Alexandria, for example, declaimed against classical theorizing and myths, including sensual pleasure in musical ceremony, to this end interpreting explicit scriptural directives as allegory:

> The Spirit, distinguishing from such revelry the divine service, sings, "Praise Him with sound of trumpet;" for with sound of trumpet He shall raise the dead. "Praise Him on the psaltery;" for the tongue is the psaltery of the Lord. "And praise Him on the lyre." By the lyre is meant the mouth struck by the Spirit, as it were by a plectrum. "Praise with the timbrel and dance," refers to the church meditating on the resurrection of the dead in the resounding skin. "Praise him on the chords and organ." Our body He calls an organ, and its nerves are the strings, by which it has received harmonious tension, and when struck by the Spirit, it gives forth human voices. "Praise Him on the clashing cymbals." He calls the tongue the cymbal of the mouth, which resounds with the pulsation of the lips. Therefore He cried to humanity, "Let every breath praise the Lord," because He cares for every breathing thing which He hath made. For man is truly a pacific instrument; while other instruments, if you investigate, you will find to be warlike, inflaming to lusts, or kindling up amours, or rousing wrath. [31]

Further solutions emerged from the dilemmas of eighteenth-century translation, which, in the case of Isaac Watts's "Preface" were quite unequivocal: "Would I encourage a Parish-

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31 Clement of Alexandria, trans. Rev. William Wilson (Edinburgh, 1867, 1869), Vols. IV and XII of Ante-Nicene Christian Library, ed. Rev. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, "The Instructor", Book II, Sec. 4, in IV, 216.

Clerk to stand up in the midst of a Country Church, and bid all the People joyn with his Words and say, I will praise thee upon a Psaltery; or, I will open my dark Saying upon the Harp; when even our Cathedrals sing only to the Sound of an Organ, most of the meaner Churches can have no Music but the Voice, and others will have none besides? Why then must all that will sing a Psalm at Church use such Words as if they were to play upon Harp and Psaltery, when Thousands never saw such an Instrument, and know nothing of the Art?"[32] But Watts's represented an extreme position. Most paraphrasers were content to follow the explicit language of either the Coverdale or Authorized versions, embellishing according to individual whim or expressive design. As might be expected, the results were often scarcely differentiable:

> Upon an instrument of ten strings, and upon the psaltery; upon the harp with a solemn sound.
> (Psalm 92. 3 (KJV))

> Take the Lute, and Violin;
> Let the solemn Harp begin;
> Instruments strung with ten strings;
> While the Silver Cimbal rings.

> Upon a ten string'd instrument,
> and on the psaltery,
> On the harp, with a sound pleasant,
> a solemn melody.

> To ten-string'd Instruments we'll sing,
> With tuneful Psalt'ry's join'd;
> And to the Harp, with solemn Sounds,
> For sacred use design'd.

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32 The Psalms of David (London, 1719), pp. xiii-xiv.

> Upon an instrument likewise
> whereto ten strings are bound,
> Upon your harps and psalteries
> With sweet and solemn sound. . . . [33]

In the passage recently quoted, Clement of Alexandria wrote in terms of the human "instrument", a musico-metaphysical concept, which, as suggested, was also developed through secularized philosophy.[34] Even towards the end of the eighteenth century one writer stated that "we are to look upon the human body, consisting of bones and nerves, as a kind of musical instrument mounted with strings".[35] And in modern times the analogy has remained valid as an expression of man's psychical constitution, thus serving classical, humanist and orthodox doctrines alike. In this last-named manner, the altar of God represents the ultimate goal of the questing spirit. On attaining this phase the soul has become "'resounding', all the false notes and dissonances of his nature are overcome; he is a walking song of praise . . . The Christ-filled man must develop his soul with all its powers of resonance to become the harp of God. Thus the Apocalypse of St. John sees the redeemed as

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33 George Sandys, A Paraphrase Upon the Psalms of David, rev. John Playford (London, 1676), p.159; George Scott, The Psalms of David (Edinburgh, 1768), p.242; N. Tate and N. Brady, A New Version of the Psalms of David (London, 1696), p.190; William Barton, The Book of Psalms in Metre (London, 1696), p.236.

34 For biblical references to this idea see Job 30. 31; Isaiah 16. 11; Isaiah 58. 1; Jeremiah 48. 36. Note Gretchen Ludke Finney, Musical Backgrounds for English Literature (1962; rpt. Connecticut, 1976), pp.1-20; and John Hollander, The Untuning of the Sky (Princeton, 1961), pp. 266-72.

35 Thomas Robertson, An Inquiry into the Fine Arts (London, 1784), p. 34, quoted in Alexander, "'Ut Musica Poesis'", p. 143.

playing on the harp (Rev. 14. 2)".[36]

Smart's knowledge of this idea is apparent from his translation of Psalm 66:

> I called unto him with my mouth: and gave him praises with my tongue.
>
> (Psalm 66. 15)

> To God, who has my organs tun'd,
> I with my mouth have sung,
> And with him in my heart commun'd,
> Which harmoniz'd my tongue.
>
> (Psalm LXVI, ll. 57-60)

Because harmonious musical utterance betokens a union between man and God, so also the body, functioning as a well-ordered instrument, denotes that Divine concord which holds the human soul in balance. Its fruits are reflected outwardly in song, and interiorly through the practice of prayer. Although traditionally ascribed to self-discipline, even temperament is attributed by Smart to God, for the human body is an instrument of His Divine will. Thus consecrated, it expresses the music of heart and tongue; that is, prayer and praise:

> My lips, which cannot praise too much,
> Shall speak as by thine hallow'd touch
> They're sanctified and tun'd. . . .
>
> (Psalm CXIX, ll. 1021-23)

Since God's blessings "harmonize" with His commandments, so,

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36 Rudolf Frieling, Hidden Treasure in the Psalms, trans. Mabel Cotterell, rev. A. Heidenreich and E. Hersey, 2nd ed. (1954; London, 1967), p. 107.

together, they are "worthiest to be sung".

Not only the suppliant's lips, but also his spirit might be composed by the "melody" of God's revealed Word. Hence Smart directs his prayer to "the preceptor of my soul":

> O how sweet are thy words . . .
> (Psalm 119. 103)
>
> O thou hast sent my soul to sooth
> Thy words, how musically smooth,
> And elegantly chaste. . . .
> (Psalm CXIX, ll. 613-15)

As "the beautiful in music . . . agrees best with such [sounds] as are clear, even, smooth, and weak",[37] so God's words of comfort fall tunefully on man's ear and to his understanding.[38] Instrumental music may also moderate the passions:

> With soul-soothing shawms . . .
> . . . O temper your mirth,
> (Psalm XCVIII (Alt.), ll. 21-22)
>
> The soothing symphanies, [sic] they frame,
> (Psalm XIX, l. 19)

although in these instances alliterative contingency cannot be altogether discounted.[39] Tempering of the soul may also find

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37 [Burke], p. 112.

38 Conversely, as Smart expressed it in Jubilate Agno, ". . . all whispers and unmusical sounds in general are of the Adversary" (B1.231). See also Appendix I.

39 Note also Smart's expression of this concept in an early work: Carmen Cl. Alexandri Pope in S. Caeciliam Latine Redditum [2nd ed.] . . . [with] an Ode for Musick on Saint Cecilia's Day (Cambridge, 1746), pp. 32-33.

expression through musical homage: "All my frame shall sing in rapture" (Psalm XXXV, l. 37). Here the bodily response matches the soul's exultation, and emphasizes the transcendent nature of praise in the midst of jeopardy. And in Psalm XCVIII Smart shows each thankful impulse as revealed in music, the vocalization of prayer. Whenever the Spirit moves men's hearts in gratitude, they worship on instruments which are figurative extensions of themselves:

> Ye jocund harpers, kneel,
> As you the impulse feel,
> And to the Lord your praise intend;
> Ye holy psalmists join
> In harmony divine,
> And all your grateful voices blend.
> (ll. 31-36)

By way of conclusion, it is apparent that Smart's paraphrases incorporate musical ideas acquired from a variety of sources. If, in a final analysis, the long journey through the volume yields more to an analytical overview than to the uncovering of objective merit, it is not a journey undertaken in vain. There is a theological and technical boldness about the Psalms, and at times an unexpected felicity of expression which matches rather than anticipates A Song to David. And from within the conflicts of style and language, the doctrinal complexities and personal dilemmas, there emerges the image of a poet faithful to his own dictum: "For a NEW SONG also is best, if it be to the glory of God" (Jubilate Agno, B2. 390).

CHAPTER NINE ORATORIOS

> There is no Part of Heav'n so high,
> But is accessible with ease,
> If faithful Diligence apply
> Upon her never-wearied Knees.
> By pray'r the Miracle is done,
> By pray'r th'eternal Prize is won.[1]

It is an ironic fact of English musicology that the most celebrated indigenous choral form in the latter half of the eighteenth century owed its inception to a German-born composer, schooled in French techniques, whose primary allegiance was to the highly-mannered Italian operatic tradition. The oratorio did not emerge as a monumental corollary to the cathedral anthems and motets of Boyce, Croft and Greene, nor could its stylistic genesis be traced to the lofty church music of Purcell. Handel only turned to this musico-dramatic mode following repeated setbacks in the field of opera, and the new compositions proclaimed a national identity expressed through the Baroque splendour of marches, epic tone blocks and stupendous polyphonic and declamatory devices.

The background to oratorio is inextricably linked both to English theatre music and to English social consciousness. The unprecedented popularity of the

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[1] Hannah. An Oratorio. Written by Mr. Smart (London, [1764]), p.8; all quotations are from this edition.

pastiche Beggar's Opera (1728), which heralded a new species of vernacular ballad operas, hastened the demise of the reigning Italian model, and the glowing sense of British nationhood found ready analogy in the Old Testament trials and eventual triumphs of the Israelite people. The Handelian oratorio was unashamedly grandiose in conception; the service of music in devotional forms was widely accepted as conducive to heavenward aspirations, but the innovatory musical dramas added a dimension far removed from the pietistic ideals of the German Lutheran reforms. The heroic self-assurance encapsulated in the libretti and everywhere extolled in the choruses was undeniably secular in character, and the God in Whom all enterprise was initiated and by Whose hand all contingencies were governed, not infrequently assumed the character of a transcendent military commander.

Although Handel's oratorios were not — with rare exceptions — acted out, they were nevertheless often sung in theatres with the performers ranged on the stage. Moreover, Handel clearly conceived the oratorio as taking place in the "theatre of the mind", and this is confirmed by his division of the text into acts and scenes, and by his use of "stage directions" throughout. Indeed, the dramatic presentation of the texts themselves by the librettists, and the vigorous pacing of characters and events, offered splendid opportunities for a correspondingly vivid musical treatment.

One obvious difficulty facing the literary composer of oratorios, however, lay in his utilization of text. As the Old Testament histories stood, they scarcely furnished an adequate dramatic and emotional vehicle for musical setting, and some adaptation was clearly necessary. But the possibility of inserting extraneous matter, trivializing or demystifying Scripture, introducing amatory sub-plots or merely pandering to the residual vagaries of operatic conventions was a collateral temptation from which few writers were entirely delivered. Nor was the librettist's office a revered one, for he stood in servitude to the composer and to his biblical source. As John Brown expressed the dilemma of English oratorio writing:

> the leading Impropriety hath arisen from an entire Separation of the Poet's and Musician's Office. Even when the Poet remains principal, this Separation tends to bad Effects: But to compleat the Evil, the Musician's Character hath here, in many Instances, assumed the Precedence; and the Poet become subservient to him, as his Director. How this came to pass, may be easily explained. This Kind of Poem being unknown in ENGLAND when HANDEL arrived; and that great Musician being the first who introduced the Oratario; it became a Matter of Necessity, that he should employ some Writer in his Service. Now this being a Degradation, to which Men of Genius would not easily submit, he was forced to apply to Versifiers instead of Poets. Thus the Poem was the Effect either of Hire or Favour, when it ought to have been the voluntary Emanation of Genius. Hence, most of the Poems he composed to, are such, as would have sunk and disgraced any other Music than his own.

Those lesser musicians who imitated Handel were confronted with the same problem, for if the libretto was marked by

dulness and artificiality, then the ensuing music was invariably stillborn: "the general Composition being unconnected, weak, and unaffecting, there could be neither Contrast nor Succession of pathetic Songs and Choirs; which, when properly united in one great Subject, heighten each other by a continued Progression".[2]

The substance of Brown's objections is only too evidently reinforced by the libretti themselves. In Judas Maccabaeus, for instance, Thomas Morell appended a footnote to Part Three of the drama: "Several Incidents were introduced here . . . in order to make the Story more compleat . . . [but] were not Set, and therefore not Printed; this being design'd, not as a finish'd Poem, but merely as an Oratorio".[3] And the major periodicals were quick to denounce the deficiencies of text, as a critique of Israel in Babylon clearly demonstrated: "As to the poetical merit of the piece . . . the difficulty of writing to this kind of music . . . is the best apology for the incorrectness of the versification. Such difficulty may, indeed, be a good apology for those who might be confined to such a species of composition, and were masters of any other; but we do not think it a sufficient excuse for an

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2 A Dissertation on . . . Poetry and Music (London, 1763), pp.217-18, 219.

3 Judas Maccabaeus. A Sacred Drama (1747; Dublin, 1748), p.18n.

attempt wherein so little poetical capacity is at all to be discovered".[4] A further review in the same issue was more succinct and lamented the very existence of a performance "in which there is so palpable a mediocrity of style and composition . . . we are sorry to find the Muses such antique Heathens, as to seem determined to have nothing to do with our modern sacred Dramas".[5]

Indeed, as Charles Burney remarked, "There was certainly at this time [c. 1760] a great scarcity of lyric poets" to satisfy the demands of aspiring composers.[6] Following Handel's return from Ireland to London, from which point he devoted himself to large-scale sacred works, the performance and publication of oratorios became endemic. Moreover, the articles of law which proscribed theatrical ventures during Lent had been conveniently circumvented in the case of oratorio, and the provision for staged dramas of an avowedly religious cast on Wednesdays and Fridays brought forward a plethora of essays in this form. Although the oratorios of Handel predominated both in musical stature and number for some thirty years — Burney catalogues fourteen such

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4 "Article 19: [Review of Israel in Babylon]", The Monthly Review, XXX (April 1764), 324-25.

5 "Article 20: [Review of Nabal]", The Monthly Review, XXX, 325. Nabal: An Oratorio (London, 1764) was more correctly a pasticcio, adapted from Handel to a libretto by T. Morell, which, in turn, commingled drama and Scripture: the latter deriving from I Samuel 25.

6 History of Music, IV (1789), 674, n.k.

works written between 1743 and 1757[7] — there was no lack of endeavour by the generality of London musicians. Burney, again, cites twenty-one specimens by composers other than Handel appearing in the years 1765 to 1773.[8] The vast majority were performed either at the Theatre Royal in Covent Garden, or at the King's Theatre in the Haymarket which was opened in 1705 and which also formed the centre for fashionable and elaborate Italian operatic productions and for their numerous English imitations.

As the century progressed, however, the constitution of a devotional work became subject to an increasing liberality of interpretation by librettist and composer alike. The oratorio had, in most instances, preserved the tripartite division of the opera, and, as noted, the disposition of the text into recitatives, arias, duets and choruses imparted a theatrical air to the whole. This theatricality was reinforced by the introduction of secular subject matter, often a coyly-conducted affaire d'amour (as in Jephtha), and by carefully devised staging and balance of soli and choruses for punctuation and to

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7 An incomplete list includes Esther (1732), Deborah (1733), Athalia (1733), Saul (1739), Israel in Egypt (1739), Messiah (1742), Samson (1743), Joseph and His Brethren (1744), Semele ("After the Manner of an Oratorio"; 1744), Belshazzar (1745), Joshua (1748), Alexander Balus (1748), Susanna (1749), Solomon (1749), Theodora (founded on a martyrology of early Christians; 1750), Jephtha (1752): all of which enjoyed numerous revivals; see Otto Erich Deutsch, Handel (London, 1955), passim.

8 History of Music, IV, 666, n.f. For a résumé of London music-making at this time, see Percy A. Scholes, The Great Dr. Burney, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1948), II, 164-83.

provide arresting histrionic effects. The occasional oratorio thus evolved into a hybrid composition in which religious fervour jostled incongruously with decidedly mundane considerations.

In addition to textual and co-ordinatory embellishments, the performance itself suffered from what Brown described as "the Separation of the Performer's from the Poet's and Musician's Art". The virtual autonomy of the performer permitted all manner of excrescences, including the flourished cadential resolution which Brown dismissed as "below the Dignity of the sacred Drama, and absolutely destructive of all true musical Expression".[9] Coupled with the variable demeanour of singers according to the sentiments being voiced, and the interpolation of concertos and other instrumental interludes, an oratorio performance in many instances represented little more than a popularized entertainment, frequently tragic in conception and embroidered with redundant religious sentiments.

It is as part of this indeterminate genre that Smart's two oratorios, Hannah and Abimelech, must be considered. As with many of his minor post-asylum works, it seems that the libretti were virtually hack-work, undertaken to avert penury and to provide sufficient income for the printing of his more ambitious ventures by a reputable publisher. It was customary for the librettist to receive the profits arising

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[9] A Dissertation, p.221.

from the sale of texts at the theatre, and Smart may have hoped to amass considerable capital by this means if the oratorios enjoyed a prolonged season.

First notification of Hannah's forthcoming staging issued from The Public Advertiser of 21 February 1764, which announced: "Ready for the Press, and will be publish'd at the Performance, Hannah, An Oratorio. The Words by Mr. Smart. The musick composed by John Worgan".[10] Exactly a month later, 30 March was stated as the date of enactment, and the programme "for two Nights only" was also to include "a Concerto on the Organ".[11] The same item was included in the number for 27 March,[12] and two days later the following notice appeared: "The Oratorio of Hannah, which was to have been performed To morrow at King's Theatre in the Haymarket, is unavoidable [sic] obliged, to be deferred till farther Notice". One may only conjecture the reasons for postponement, although the difficulties were apparently not insurmountable; on 2 April the same newspaper noted: "Tomorrow will be performed a new Oratorio call'd Hannah" (Smart's name was absent from the insert), and on 3 April the work tottered into existence: "This Day will be performed a new Oratorio call'd Hannah".[13]

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10 The Public Advertiser, No. 9142, [fol. 1r].

11 The Public Advertiser, No. 9169, 21 March 1764, [fol. 1r].

12 The Public Advertiser, No. 9174, [fol. 1r].

13 The Public Advertiser, Nos. 9176, 29 March 1764, [fol. 1r]; 9179, 2 April 1764, [fol. 1r]; 9180, 3 April 1764, [fol. 1r]. Arthur Sherbo incorrectly notes the date of performance as 2 April: Christopher Smart, p.191.

In the event Hannah received only one performance at the King's Theatre in the Haymarket, and this, it seems, was a failure.

Smart's familiarity with his collaborator John Worgan (1724–90) dated from around 1750 and undoubtedly developed at Vauxhall by way of Charles Burney. In an entry in Rees's Cyclopaedia Burney alluded to "Worgan on the organ" as among those musicians encouraged at Vauxhall in 1745 who "annually increased in merit and favour" in the sight of the gardens' habitués.[14] In 1751 Worgan composed a setting of Smart's Solemn Dirge, which was "Sung by Mr Lowe, Miss Burchell, and others, at Vaux-hall", on 17 April of that year.[15] Although the score has apparently been lost, the nature of Worgan's treatment of the following quatrain might readily be gauged:

> Sing some sad, some plaintive Ditty,
> Steept in Tears that endless flow;
> Melancholy Notes of Pity,
> Notes that mean a World of Woe.
>
> (11.9–12)

He subscribed to Smart's Poems on Several Occasions (1752), though not to A Translation of the Psalms (1765).

Worgan was a proficient organist in the Handelian style, and was employed at Vauxhall in this capacity from 1751 until

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14 Abraham Rees, The Cyclopaedia, 39 vols. (London, 1819), XXXVI, sig. 3Q4[r], s.v. Tyers, Jonathan.

15 A Solemn Dirge, Sacred to the Memory of . . . Frederic Prince of Wales (London, 1751). The Dirge comprises an opening chorus, ten songs sung alternatively by Lowe and Miss Burchell, and a concluding chorus.

1761, and again, from 1770 to 1774.[16] Both he and his brother James were composers of modest repute, and John Worgan wrote and assembled collections of songs, ballads and cantatas for performance at Vauxhall in the latter half of the eighteenth century.[17] In addition to these compilations which passed into numerous editions, Worgan also wrote canzonets "Composed purposely for Dilettanti",[18] miscellaneous keyboard studies, anthems and motets, and contributed to anthologies of psalms and hymns.[19] His exertions in publicizing and editing Domenico Scarlatti's essercizi brought him some distinction, as the following charter indicates: "Whereas John Worgan . . . hath with great Labour Study and Expence composed diverse Works consisting of Vocal and Instrumental Musick and likewise having been at great Trouble in collecting and procuring a Number of new Sonatas for the Harpsichord composed by Signior Dominico Scarlatti, that never were published . . . [he is granted a] Royal Licence for the sole printing and vending the above Works".[20]

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16 See Thomas Busby, A General History of Music, 2 vols. London, 1819), II, 511.

17 Note, for example, The Agreeable Choice. A Collection of Songs Sung . . . at Vaux-Hall-Gardens (London, [1751]); A Collection of new Songs and Ballads (London, [c. 1753]).

18 Six canzonets for two and three voices (London, [c. 1785]), title page.

19 Note William Riley, comp., Psalms and Hymns, For the Use of the Chapel of the Asylum (London, [1765?]); settings by Arnold, Worgan, Howard, Long, et al.

20 [Prefaced to] A Collection of new Songs ([c. 1753]), fol. A^r.

Of Worgan's oratorios "the principal were Hannah, performed at the Haymarket Theatre in 1764, and Manassah, performed at the Lock Hospital about two years afterwards",[21] though Hannah is seemingly his only extant work in this genre. As a choral composer Worgan adhered to late Baroque practices, and as with most of his contemporaries, was heavily indebted to the Handelian prototype. According to Oliver Goldsmith, he was numbered among Handel's "excellent and eminent scholars",[22] and the choruses to his oratorios were deemed "learned and masterly" by Burney who devoted a long paragraph of his History to Worgan's achievements.[23]

The audience's reception of Hannah must remain largely a matter of conjecture, as most historians and essayists merely recorded the performance and noted, in passing, the author of the libretto.[24] Forster's Life of Goldsmith stated that "Smart was again at large at the close of the year, [1763] and on the 3rd of the following April (1764) a sacred composition named Hannah, with his name as its author, and music by Mr. Worgan, was produced at the king's theatre";

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21 Musical Biography; Or, Memoirs of . . . Musical Composers and Writers, 2 vols. (London, 1814), II, 207. See Illus. XXI.

22 Replies to a correspondent in British Magazine (April 1760); rpt. Deutsch, p.843.

23 History of Music, IV, 665-66; see also Musical Biography, loc. cit.

24 See, for instance, Grove, XX, 530, s.v. Worgan; Burney named the oratorio but not the librettist: see History of Music, IV, 666, n.f.

HANNAH

AN

ORATORIO

As perform'd at the

KINGS THEATRE

in the

HAY-MARKET, *April 1764.*

Set to Music by

Mr. WORGAN.

Opera Prima

London

Printed for the Author by Mrs Johnson oppofite Bow Church Cheapfide.
1764 Nov.r 3

Illus. XXI. Worgan, Hannah [1764], title page [reduced]. B.L. G.242(1).

Goldsmith himself attempted a similar three-act oratorio on the Babylonian captivity which was never published in its entirety nor set.[25] Among modern critics, Arthur Sherbo is inclined to censure the composer more than the writer, "but reading the libretto as poetry divorced from its musical score still hardly does Smart justice, for there is very little that is memorable in his verses".[26]

The fullest commendation of Worgan's labours, however, is found in a fulsome and scarcely impartial "Memoir" which was printed in a nineteenth-century periodical:

> It is owing to this iniquitous idolatry [of paying excessive homage to a work by Haydn or Handel] that the oratorio of Hannah struggled into light, and soon disappeared. The adorers of HANDEL would not hear of oratorios composed by ARNE, WORGAN, and ARNOLD, and such is human nature, that in certain points those who ought to know better, are as weak and infatuated as the million. Hannah teems with resplendent beauties, but is enfeebled by the doggrel of poor KIT SMART, and rendered generally impracticable by a superabundance of merciless divisions, which however it seems was a sacrifice to the taste of the times, that even then was infested by the mania of extravagant execution.

Worgan's obituarist continued indignantly: "'The chorusses of this oratorio', says DR. BURNEY, 'were masterley', and we dare say the newspapers of the time used the same 'good set

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25 John Forster, The Life . . . of Oliver Goldsmith (London, 1848), p.298.

26 Christopher Smart, p.191.

terms'. Such 'mouth honour' however, was to repay the composer for a chorus the fruit of a fortnight's toil, and for some of the noblest efforts of the 'studium cum divite venâ'".[27]

If "The sweetest melody breathes in every air of this meritorious work",[28] the same could hardly be said of the libretto. "Piously lachrymose and very dull", remarked one modern critic,[29] and contemporaneous reviews were no more magnanimous. As The Monthly Review peremptorily remarked: "There are in this piece some airs superior to most we meet with in performances of this kind. They are not of sufficient merit, however, to make us retract the opinion we formed on reading Nabal, concerning the heathenism of the Muses".[30] Notwithstanding these strictures, five lyric stanzas from the oratorio did engage the notice of Rev. James Plumptre, who printed "The Village Hind" and "Prayer" in the second volume of his song collection.[31]

Smart based his text on the narrative of Hannah as recorded in the first and second chapters of the first book

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27 "Memoir of . . . Worgan", The Quarterly Musical Magazine and Review, V No. 17 (London, 1823), 113-34 (pp.118-19).

28 Ibid., p.119.

29 Devlin, Poor Kit Smart, p.157.

30 "Article 21. Hannah: An Oratorio", The Monthly Review, XXX (April 1764), 325.

31 A Collection of Songs, 3 vols. (London, 1824), II, 321, 375-76.

of Samuel. According to the poet, "The only Liberty Mr. Smart has taken with the sacred Story is that he has introduced the Song of Hannah as a Thanksgiving immediate upon her Acceptance in Shiloh, whereas it was not composed till after the Birth of Samuel. This Liberty he humbly hopes is more pardonable than the total Omission of so pious and beautiful a Piece" (sig.A2^{r}). Notwithstanding this brief indication of his methodology, Smart in fact amplified his biblical source considerably, repositioning episodes to heighten dramatic effect and introducing emotional embroidery to sustain human interest. In this he followed the accepted pattern of commuting Old Testament starkness into flaccid eighteenth-century prolixity. As Benjamin Stillingfleet outlined his treatment of the history of Joseph: "[I have] managed the story with all the delicacy and propriety of which it was susceptible, and . . . [have] introduced many just and striking sentiments on the fatal effects of disorderly passions, and the innate satisfaction arising from conscious innocence". And unlike Smart, Stillingfleet felt obliged to preface his oratorio with some explanation: "IN order to vindicate myself from the imputation of having capriciously invented circumstances merely for the embellishment of the following Drama . . . ."[32]

The scriptural tale of Hannah is a straightforward one. Elkanah has two wives: Peninnah who is blest with many

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32 Literary Life and Select Works of Benjamin Stillingfleet, 2 vols. in 3 (London, 1811), I, 152; II Part One, 53.

children and Hannah who is barren (I Samuel 1.2). When Elkanah journeys each year to Shiloh to offer worship to God (v.3), Peninnah mocks Hannah's sterility (vv.6-7). Hannah is consoled by Elkanah (v.8) and goes up to the temple to pray. Here she is seen weeping bitterly by Eli, before whom she vows to dedicate a child to God if He would answer her petition (vv.9-12). Eli at first rebukes her, then blesses her prayer, and Hannah leaves comforted (v.18). She then conceives (v.20) and bears Samuel, and after weaning him, takes him up to Shiloh to thank God in the presence of Eli (vv.25-28). Hannah composes her song of thankfulness (I Samuel 2.10): "My heart rejoiceth in the LORD . . . I rejoice in thy salvation"; the boy Samuel stays ministering in the temple and Eli blesses Elkanah and Hannah so that they increase in fruitfulness (v.20).

The most consistent change that Smart initiates is, as Moira Dearnley notes, to subordinate "speech, action, and characterization to a 'poetic' theme of fertility versus barrenness, expressed through symbolic imagery".[33] It seems clear as to why Smart should have embarked on this re-emphasis. Firstly, it is not unreasonable to suggest that he saw correspondences between his highly sustained burst of literary activity from 1763-65 followed the enforced

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33 Poetry of Smart, p.219.

"impotency" of confinement, and Hannah's childbearing following her thwarted productivity. There are additional semblances in the family tensions of Hannah and Elkanah and Smart's estrangement from his wife, though these should not be over-emphasized. Secondly, Hannah's great psalm of gratitude which includes references to "the pillars of the . . . LORD['s]" (I Samuel 2.8) and to God exalting "the horn of his anointed" (v.10), would have found a ready parallel in Smart's own mental elation. Moreover, gratitude, as we have seen, was closely associated in Smart's mind with music, and he specifically linked Hannah's song with the "gift of Musick" in Jubilate Agno, B2.458: "For the Old Greeks and the Italians are one people, which are blessed in the gift of Musick by reason of the song of Hannah and the care of Samuel with regard to divine melody".[34]

In "Hymn IX: The Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin", Smart paid tribute to

> . . . Hannah, of the three,
> That sang in Mary's key;
> With her that made her psalm
> Beneath the bow'ring palm;
> (st. VIII)[35]

and in "Hymn I: The New Year" he conjoined Hannah and David as singers imbued with the spirit of prayer and praise (sts. VIII, X). Appropriately, the image of worship is assigned to the New

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34 There are further correspondences of "horns" with music and fertility: see Fragment C. 145-62. Eli is invoked in B1.25 and Elkanah in B1.90.

35 Hymns and Spiritual Songs, in A Translation of the Psalms (London, 1765), pp.157-83.

Year: Smart conceived of David as artistic progenitor to God's Creation, and Hannah's miracle represents a rebirth of her disposition as well as physical impregnation. In his oratorio Smart was able to assimilate personal religious exultation into Hannah's psalm of thanksgiving through the medium of music: praise re-echoing praise. It must be conceded that adoration and gratitude were, in themselves, part of the oratorio convention. The progression from individual supplication through Divine grace to the suppliant's joy (reinforced by a choric bombast) was a well-proven formula. But Smart's incorporation of musical symbolism into Hannah suggests a typology which goes beyond mere artifice.

Act One opens with an accompanied recitative in which Peninnah praises God for her progeny and calls for "Musick,/ And every Form of Joy to bless and praise" ([p.5]). In Jubilate Agno Smart had prophesied: "For my seed shall worship the Lord JESUS as numerous & musical as the grashoppers of Paradise" (Bl.100), associating fecundity with musical praise; and in Fragment C, after noting that the restoration of "horns" gave "great occasion for mirth and musick" (C.146), he suggested, a few lines later, that "when Man was amerced of his horn, earth lost part of her fertility" (C.156). In contrast to Peninnah's jubilation, Hannah's aridity in the following scene is expressed through renunciation of musical instruments:

> Adieu to the Timbrel and Lute,
> Adieu to the Strains of the Lyre;
> No Comfort Desertion shou'd know. . . .
> (p.7)

Her barrenness finds its correspondence in silence and solitude; her solitude reflects back creation's sterility. Moira Dearnley is right to posit a relationship between the "teeming fertility, as well as the more obvious variety and beauty, of the creation" revealed in the catalogue of creatures summoned to "rejoice" in the opening section of Jubilate Agno.[36] Fertility is creative, and creativity, in turn, was always linked with music in Smart's eyes. In A Song to David he depicts David singing "of God — the mighty source/Of all things" (st. XVIII) before detailing the clustering supermundane and mundane elements which return Him worship.[37] Hannah's lament, on the other hand, employs the language of desolation and destruction, of muteness and of pitiless winds which only compound her despair.

Elkanah's succeeding air introduces a note of hope:

> Is not Genius heav'nly Fire,
> Thoughts so great and Words so free,
> Heighten'd on the living Lyre
> Giv'n from God and giv'n to Thee?
> (p.7)

The mention of "living Lyre" heralds the possibility of procreation, although the Levite counsels Hannah to patience

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36 Poetry of Smart, p.219.

37 A Song to David, 2nd ed., in A Translation of the Psalms (1765), pp. 185-94; all quotations refer to this edition.

and to self-abandonment to Divine providence: "The Remedy is not in Man or Musick/For Woes like thine, O Hannah" (p.8). Instead, he indicates that Hannah's internal "tuning" is unbalanced, and that if she "harmonizes" her thoughts and her entreaties then she will be blest:

> But if with Lips and Heart in tune
> The Lute's soft Symphonies unite,
> Sweet Hymnist, thou must have thy Boon
> Or Heav'n itself shall lose its Light.
> By pray'r the Miracle is done,
> By pray'r th'eternal Prize is won.
>
> (p.8)

New life may emerge from infertility, for the efficacy of prayer knows no confines on earth or in heaven.

The uneasy synthesis of corporeal affections and devotional exhortations implied in the opening exchanges of Peninnah and Hannah is brought more forcefully into play in the second act, in which the two women are placed as rivals to Elkanah's love. Peninnah enlists the example of melodious birds to reprove Hannah's ingratitude in the midst of God's plenitude, in a stanza which carries the lyrical and thematic complexion of Smart's mature religious poems:

> Every Bird that pipes a Note,
> Every Shrub that bears a Bloom,
> Thine Unkindnesses upbraid;
> Grateful is the Linnet's Throat,
> Grateful is the Bay's Perfume,
> And to God their Tribute's paid.
>
> (p.12)

"For the sin against the HOLY GHOST is INGRATITUDE" wrote Smart in Jubilate Agno (B2.306), and again, "For the angel

GRATITUDE is my wife" (B2.324). Peninnah's taunts are not without foundation, for Hannah's sterility has led to her thanklessness. The songsters' homage is, itself, a creative act, and appropriately this is contrasted with Hannah's inconsolability. "Let Dan rejoice with the Blackbird, who praises God with all his heart, and biddeth to be of good cheer" enjoined the poet (Jubilate Agno, A.113), and Hannah is similarly directed to spontaneous adoration. The role of music in dispelling gloomy reflections is hinted at briefly in Elkanah's remonstrances with Peninnah: "there's a sweet Musician/Shall fare the better for thy Frowns and Follies" (p.12), and the whole act is rounded off with a celestial chorus of praise which anticipates the sacramental union of human and Divine:

> Where Choristers angelic throng
> HOSANNAH HALLELUJAH is their Song;
> And to the blest Performers in the Sky,
> Hosannah Hallelujah we reply.
>
> (p.16)

The theme of music and fruition is perpetuated by Eli in the first scene of Act Three, wherein he associates God with musical utterance:

> All Things are void of Worth and Fruit
> Till God his Blessing send,
> Whose Voice can harmonize the Mute,
> And make the Deaf attend.[38]
>
> (p.18)

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38 Compare Jubilate Agno, B1.24: "For the praise of God can give to a mute fish the notes of a nightingale".

This stanza reiterates the characteristic Smartian theme that praise of the Almighty gives beauty of sound even to "Onocrotalus, [bittern] whose braying is for the glory of God, because he makes the best musick in his power" (Jubilate Agno, B1.19). And again, there is the implication that "Fruit" or procreation is associated with Divine benediction and with the creative power of the Word: "And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply" (Genesis 1.28). Hannah is filled with "sweet Forebodings" (p.18) and her great Magnificat shows that she is gradually learning to praise; her whole being is transfigured as she bears witness to the truth, "'Salvation is of God alone'":

> My Heart with Transport springs,
> To Thee the King of Kings;
> My Tongue has learnt a nobler Tone. . . .[39]
>
> (p.19)

Fertility, gratitude and music are brought together in the final scene as one of Hannah's attendants reveals how the "Fruit" of her conception is also the "Fruit" of her thankful psalmody:

> O may thy Gratitude prepare
> Thy Heart for Zeal's transcendent Blaze,
> And may the happy Hannah bear
> The Fruit of everlasting Praise.
>
> (p.21)

As Moira Dearnley summarizes the denouement: "During the course of the action of the oratorio, Hannah has been given a rational

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39 Compare On the Immensity of the Supreme Being (Cambridge, 1751), 1.143: "The tongue, which thou hast tun'd, shall chant thy praise".

foundation for her duty to give gratitude to God. The ecstatic desire for music expressed by the fruitful Peninnah at the beginning of the oratorio is replaced by the finale, the universal desire for music".[40]

The work draws to its conclusion with a panoply of homage to the transcendent God:

> The Lord in highest Bliss above,
> Himself alone is constant Love,
> Whom Seraphims adore;
> And thus their Concerts sing and play. . . .
>
> (p.22)

Smart invokes the planetary music which "hail'd Thee Architect of countless worlds":[41]

> The tuneful Spheres that deck the Sky,
> Still their sweet Influence supply,
> And shine as heretofore;
> And thus their Concerts sing and play,
>
> (p.22)

And Eli foretells that Samuel will appoint a king over Israel from whose lineage will descend the Redeemer of mankind:

> Ye Levites, blow the Trumpets in the East,
> Ye Damsels, smite the Timbrels and rejoice
> In these my Words prophetic of Salvation.
>
> (p.22)

The final benedictory chorus honours Him Whose unfathomable omniscience directs all human activity, and to Whom mankind's only fit response is an everlasting doxology:

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40 Poetry of Smart, p.222.

41 On the Eternity of the Supreme Being (Cambridge, 1750), l.27.

To Thee stupendous in thy Ways,
To Jacob's God the Blessed Uncreate
Be all Dominion, Pow'r and Praise,
And Laud and Adoration in the Height.

(p.23)

Smart's second oratorio Abimelech was staged "at the Theatre-Royal in Covent-Garden", apparently on 8 March 1768, as part of the regular Lenten oratorio season.[42] These Lenten performances were instituted by Handel,[43] and directed in the late 1780s and early 1790s by the composer of Abimelech, Samuel Arnold. A short article in The Monthly Review of May 1763 entitled "An Examination of the Oratorios which have been performed this Season at Covent-Garden Theatre" noted the encomiums bestowed on several of this species of composition,[44] and a memoir of Arnold detailed the sacred works "performed during several successive Lents, at the Theatres-Royal Haymarket and Covent Garden, under his [Arnold's] own management and direction".[45]

Under the subsequent supervision of Handel's amanuensis, J.C. Smith (1712-95) and John Ashley (c. 1740-1805), the concerts degenerated into musical miscellanies, pastiches

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42 Abimelech. An Oratorio [title page missing] (London, [1768]), half-title; all quotations are from this edition.

43 See W.T. Parke, Musical Memoirs, 2 vols. (London, 1830), I, 31.

44 "Article 20", The Monthly Review, XXVIII (May 1763), 404.

45 "Memoir of Samuel Arnold", The Harmonicon, Part One (London, 1830), 137-39 (p. 137).

and entertainments, some of which were not even founded on religious themes; and even the more orthodox programmes interpolated a secular work, usually a virtuoso concerto, for the added delectation of the fashionable audiences. Parke's Memoirs, for instance, recorded Arnold's oratorio productions with the Concert of Antient Music at Drury Lane which dated from 1786, and described a performance of Messiah of this year in which, "At the end of the first act I performed a concerto on the oboe".[46] Notwithstanding this unfortunate transmutation, the oratorios themselves were, in the main, widely acclaimed. The striking success of the Handel commemorations (1784–91), which provided an unprecedented coup d'oeil, also testified to the popular fervour with which this master's compositions were received.

The genesis of Smart's libretto need not detain us. It would seem to represent one further aborted attempt at averting the terrors of "the purse".[47] As with Hannah, it also furnished a convenient narrative basis for the musical ventures of another aspiring London composer, who, at the time of writing, had not attained his twenty-eighth year. Samuel Arnold (1740–1802) was nothing if not prolific. At the end of his life his published output included sacred music, comic operas,[48]

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46 Musical Memoirs, I, 65.

47 Jubilate Agno, Bl.276, 279, 283.

48 One reference claims fifty-five operas alone for Arnold: see Musical Biography, II, 229–35.

pantomimes and burlettas (mainly written for Marylebone Gardens from 1769 to 1776 and frequently revived),[49] pastoral "entertainments" of questionable merit, songs, odes, catches, glees, serenatas and cantatas (many of which were enthusiastically received at Vauxhall), and miscellaneous works for harpsichord, flute and pianoforte. Of his large-scale vocal essays Charles Burney remarked, presumably without intent of mischief, that he "very judiciously complied with the reigning taste, and imitated or adopted the opera style in all its vicissitudes".[50] The extraordinary success of his Maid of the Mill, which was decked out in elaborate Italianate trappings, would suggest a composer well acquainted with the ascendant musical vogues. And following the example of many of his contemporaries, he also provided musical settings of psalms and hymns.[51]

Composition, however, denoted only one facet of the versatile Dr. Arnold. He succeeded James Nares as organist and composer to the Chapel Royal in 1783;[52] was named an Assistant Director (together with Benjamin Cooke, Edmund

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49 See George Colman, the Younger, Random Records, 2 vols. (London, 1830), I, 49.

50 History of Music, IV, 675.

51 See The Psalms of David . . . Music selected, adapted, and composed, by Dr Arnold . . . Assisted by J.W. Callcott (London, 1791). The "Preface" noted that the "progress of vocal music in this country since the last century has been very rapid . . . particularly strengthened by the revival of choral music in the grand selections from Handel's works at Westminster Abbey" (p.3).

52 See Burney, III (1789), 622.

Ayrton and four others) of the Handel Commemoration of 1784;[53] established the Glee Club with J.W. Callcott in 1787;[54] became conductor of the Academy of Antient Music in 1789 until its demise in 1792;[55] founded the Graduates Meeting in 1790,[56] and was a signatory (together with Burney, Cooke and Ayrton) to the Charter of the Royal Society of Musicians granted by George III on 26 August of this same year;[57] established the Choral Fund in 1791;[58] and was appointed organist at Westminster Abbey in 1793. In the field of musicology he had evidently planned a Dictionary of Musical Terms in 1779 or 1780, much to the annoyance of Burney who viewed any excursion into this field as tantamount to wilful

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53 See Charles Burney, An Account of the Musical Performances . . . in Commemoration of Handel (London, 1785), [Part Two] pp. 11, 17, et passim. Burney detailed the performances of 26, 27, 29 May and 3, 5 June 1784. Note Scholes, II, 63.

54 The Glee Club was convoked informally in 1783 and formalized four years later; its members included many of London's leading professional musicians.

55 See Reminiscences of Michael Kelly, 2 vols. (London, 1826), I, 322; note, "The subscribers were chiefly bankers and merchants from the city (loc. cit.).

56 The Society of Musical Graduates was convened on 24 November, and Arnold remained a member until his death in 1802; see Scholes, II, 119-20.

57 See F.G.E., "The Royal Society of Musicians", The Musical Times, XLVI, 1 October 1905, 637-45. The RSM provided for "the support and maintenance of decayed Musicians and their families" (p.638).

58 The Choral Fund encouraged the performance of oratorios and was also pledged to alleviate hardship among choral singers and their families.

trespass; issued in the manner of Boyce, an edition of Cathedral Music in 1790;[59] and between 1787 and 1797 assembled his most enduring monument: a thirty-six-folio-volume, one-hundred-and-eighty-number "Complete Edition of the Works of HANDEL in Score".[60]

The nature of Smart's meeting with Arnold, if indeed there was one, must remain hypothetical. It is possible that poet and composer were introduced at Vauxhall in the mid-1760s after Smart's release from confinement, or through the intervention of Thomas Arne or Charles Burney who are linked in Jubilate Agno, D.196: "Let Arne, house of Arne rejoice with The Jay of Bengal. God be gracious to Arne his wife to Michael & Charles Burney". A reference to "Arnold, house of Arnold" in Jubilate Agno, D.231, may be significant, although as Fragment D was penned between July 1762 and January 1763, Samuel Arnold would have only been twenty-two or twenty-three. Moreover, Smart's recourse to obituary notices for his nomenclature is well-documented,[61] and a "Mr Arnold" is mentioned in the "List of Promotions" in The Gentleman's Magazine for December 1760. The same magazine noted a "Dr. Arnold" in "Ecclesiastical Preferments"

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59 Cathedral Music, ed. and rev. Samuel Arnold, 4 vols. (London, 1790). The volumes assemble a comprehensive quantity of ecclesiastical music of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

60 Burney, History, IV, 688; also IV, 276, 375, 666. See Paul Hirsch, "Dr. Arnold's Handel Edition (1787-1797)", The Music Review, ed. Geoffrey Sharp, VIII (1947), 106-16. Note Burney's bequest of the volumes: see Scholes, II, 268.

61 See Arthur Sherbo, "Christopher Smart, Reader of Obituaries", MLN, LXXI No. 3 (March 1956), 177-82.

for April 1761 and again in May 1761; a "Rev. Dr. Arnold" appeared in the "List of Marriages" for June 1761, and a "Mr Arnold" figured in the "Historical Chronicle" for November of this same year.[62]

One hitherto unremarked circumstance is that Arnold provided a setting of Smart's "Hymn for the Haymakers" which was performed at Marylebone Gardens in August 1763. As the "Hymn" had been penned over a decade earlier, however, the impetus for Arnold's composition would not seem directly related to an encounter between poet and musician. It is more likely that the collaboration was instigated by any one of a number of musicians, impresarios or literary figures who assisted Smart in some capacity following his discharge from bedlam in the early part of 1763. Arnold's name does not appear in the roll-call of London musicians who subscribed to Smart's Psalms (1765). One need not, in any case, assume a friendly relationship between the two men, for, as already noted, the eighteenth-century oratorio librettist was little more than a hireling and Arnold may simply have sought the offices of a versifier following the comparative triumph of his first venture in the form.

In January 1767 Arnold's setting of John Brown's The Cure of Saul. A Sacred Ode was received in London with

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62 The Gentleman's Magazine, Vols. XXX (December 1760), 595; XXXI (April 1761), 190; XXXI (May 1761), 238; XXXI (June 1761), 284; XXXII (November 1761), 531.

considerable acclaim.[63] According to one source, "'nothing, since Mr. Handel's time, had appeared in that species of composition equal to it'".[64] The success of Saul was sufficient "to encourage the continuance of his [Arnold's] efforts in the same high province, and the following year, he brought forward his Abimelech. The applause obtained by this his second oratorial production, established the reputation of its composer".[65] This same estimation was advanced by Parke, who noted that The Curse [sic] of Saul "established the character of its composer, and encouraged him to proceed" with Abimelech.[66] Arnold wrote between seven and nine oratorios in all, including Resurrection (1769) and Prodigal Son, the latter of which "he successfully submitted to the public judgment" in 1773, and which subsequently became his most celebrated religious work.[67] He also set John Hughes's On the Power of Music as a doctoral exercise.

Extant opinions concerning Arnold's skill as a choral composer are divided. The entry in Rees's Cyclopaedia

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63 The Cure of Saul . . . Music composed by Mr. Arnold (London, 1767), libretto only.

64 Kelly, II, 358.

65 Busby, II, 468.

66 Musical Memoirs, I, 326.

67 Busby, II, 468. Parke claims seven oratorios (Memoirs, I, 328); Grove lists nine (I, 619, s.v. Arnold); Musical Biography, loc. cit., suggests seven.

considered his oratorios to be "not unworthy of the disciple of so great a master as Handel".[68] This verdict was reprinted in The Harmonicon "Memoir", which also added: "he . . . acquitted himself with high credit in those solemn and august subjects which relate to our religious duties".[69] Thomas Busby, however, considered Arnold "in general . . . [to be] most successful when he was least aspiring". Busby's account continued:

> But his oratorios . . . present the most decisive proofs of the sphere of composition beyond which his good sense ought not to have suffered him to aspire. Possessing neither the solemnity of sentiment, nor sublimity of conception, indispensable to the sacred drama, the style of his air was too operatical, and the texture of his chorus too loose and slight, for that province of composition to which even the powers of Arne were not adequate. . . .[70]

The fact that Abimelech received only one performance, and that completely ignored by the Monthly and Critical Reviews, would suggest that the latter assessment is perhaps the more accurate.

Father Devlin has pronounced the libretto to be "a doleful piece of no distinction".[71] The same questions that

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68 Cyclopaedia, II, sig. 5E3^{r}, s.v. Arnold.

69 "Memoir" (1830), p.138.

70 A General History, II, 472, 473.

71 Poor Kit Smart, p.176.

dogged Hannah are unresolved in Abimelech, which emerges as an enervated, pedestrian adaptation, enlivened only by a few charming lyrics that evoke the music of Smart's finer verses.[72] The recitatives are marked by the poet's uncharacteristic use of a conversational blank verse, but neither oratorio is innovatory nor culminating in terms of Smart's stylistic development.

The biblical narrative of Abimelech, as contained in Genesis 20, seems scarcely creditable if given a fundamentalist reading. Abraham and his wife Sarah have sojourned in Gerar (v.1) at which place Sarah is abducted by King Abimelech in the mistaken belief that she is Abraham's sister (v.2). God appears to Abimelech in a dream, reveals the truth, and the king, without having violated Sarah, protests his innocence (vv.3-6). Sarah must be restored to Abraham, who, as a prophet, will pray for Abimelech's safety and long life (v.7). Abraham justifies his deception of Abimelech (v.11) and reveals that Sarah is also his half-sister (v.12). Abimelech restores her to Abraham with gifts and allows the prophet to settle in Gerar.

In addition to debasing the Genesis passage with what Moira Dearnley sees as his own misogynous and anti-Deist views,[73] Smart also circumvents the scriptural chronology

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72 Geoffrey Grigson refers to the "pathetically personal and unmannered songs" of Abimelech : Christopher Smart, Writers and their Work No. 136 (London, 1961), p.40. There are possible correlations between Sarah's seclusion and Smart's isolation.

73 Poetry of Smart, pp.223-25.

in the interests of theatrical impact. He ranges Abraham, Sarah and the Chosen (who are given imagery of light and music) against Abimelech who is depicted as lustful and acrimonious, and appropriates Hagar from the following chapter (Genesis 21) to appear in concert with Sarah during her exile.

The piece opens with a recitative addressed to God by Abraham, which is couched in the traditional language of fervent supplication:

> O great and glorious! at whose footstool falls
> The seraph adoration, and renews
> His hymns and praise for ever - hear thy servant. . . .
>
> (p.4)

As patriachal founder of the Hebrew people and forebear of David, Abraham was a favoured instrument of praise with Smart, who invoked the prophet in the opening paean of Jubilate Agno: "Let Abraham present a Ram, and worship the God of his Redemption" (A.5). He also formed the ancestral foundation for Smart's account of the descent of the British nation: "For the ENGLISH are the seed of Abraham and work up to him by Joab, David, and Naphtali" (B2.433), which climaxed in the poet's allegation: "For I give God the glory that I am a son of ABRAHAM a PRINCE of the house of my fathers" (B1.73).[74] The following air conjoins the "music of the contrite heart"[75]

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74 See also Jubilate Agno, B1.77, 293.

75 Hymn to the Supreme Being (London, 1756), l.82.

with vocal intercession, as Abraham petitions his Lord in imagery particularly favoured by Smart: "Do thou, my Saviour, form my pray'r;/Be thou my word and music too" (p.4). And Sarah also turns to music for comfort as she laments her displacement from her native land:

> Do not those soothing pow'rs refuse,
> But, as the mother of the Muse,
> Shape all my sorrows into song.
>
> (p.6)

The symbolic association of Abraham's wife with melodiousness is maintained in Part Two. Here Smart introduces Hagar who commends patience to the mournful exile, and assures her of the continuum of regeneration: "Attend to what the starlings sing,/Another year, another spring" (p.12). Hagar had appeared in Jubilate Agno in company with an eagle (B1.10), and Sarah herself is addressed six lines further on in imagery suggestive of procreation arising from extinction: "Let Sarah rejoice with the Redwing, whose harvest is in the frost and snow. For the hour of my felicity, like the womb of Sarah, shall come at the latter end" (B1.16). But Sarah compares her lot to that of a caged bird, at first hostile, who comes to accept his imprisoned state, even adopting the tutored peal of his master's flute:

> But, the bullfinch, unenraged,
> Sings, and bids despair retire:
> Grows familiar, once so wild,
> Pipes the tune the master sets;
> Trusts the finger of a child,
> Nor his captive state regrets.[76]
>
> (pp.14-15)

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[76] Compare A Song to David, st. LXV.

Following protracted reflections on human passions, which seem ill-matched with the pious ejaculations of Abraham and Sarah, the oratorio is brought to a triumphant conclusion. The "Chorus for Warlike Music" that had terminated the disruptive events of Part One - "See the thund'ring coursers bound,/To the trumpet's lofty sound" (p.10) - now proclaims amity and harmony:

> Sound, ye instruments of fight,
> Sound to war and blood no more:
> Tune your trumpets to delight,
> Flourish on th'increasing store.
> This is triumph, this is fame.
> Bless the music and the measure,
> That administer to pleasure,
> While they love and peace proclaim.
>
> (p.23)

By way of conclusion, the question might be posed whether Hannah and Abimelech, which have generally been judged deficient in poetic values, possess any merits of construction that would make for effective oratorio libretti. Few purely literary virtues of a text survive, in any case, in a musical setting, for most are either lost or replaced by the excellencies of the music, if such there be. The poetry of Jennens' libretto of Saul, for instance,[77] is at once stilted and over-embellished, yet the author's finely conceived placing and development of incidents provides excellent opportunities for Handel's music, and thus contributes

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77 Saul, An Oratorio, Or Sacred Drama. Set to Musick by Mr. Handel [Libretto] (Salisbury, 1760). Saul was first performed on 16 January 1739.

markedly to the stature of the work.

Smart himself was certainly aware of the poetic and formal possibilities inherent in the genre. An article in The Student of 1751 commends that "species of musical dramas call'd the oratorio", which is "most admirably calculated to fulfil the great end of drama, to make men more virtuous". The writer continues:

> I believe our oratorios at present in vogue, tho' not very remarkable for poetical composition, have their good effect on the more rational and sober part of the audience. Yet what more universal and useful effects would this species of the drama produce, if it was to join true poetry, with true piety, and the sacred characters introduced, were taught to speak from the head as well as the heart? Add to this, a regularity of plan might be maintained (which hitherto has been utterly neglected) as well as in any other dramatic piece.

In short, as the author concludes, "the part of the poet has been too much neglected in musical dramas".[78]

In respect of structural design, the librettos of Hannah and Abimelech are not inferior to those of Joseph (Handel/Miller), Deborah (Handel/Humphreys), Solomon (Boyce/Moore), Jephtha (Stanley/Frere), or any one of a number of comparable mid-century oratorios. No score of Abimelech is extant, but in Hannah it would seem, rather, that Worgan's technically competent but artistically outmoded musical setting does not realize with any degree

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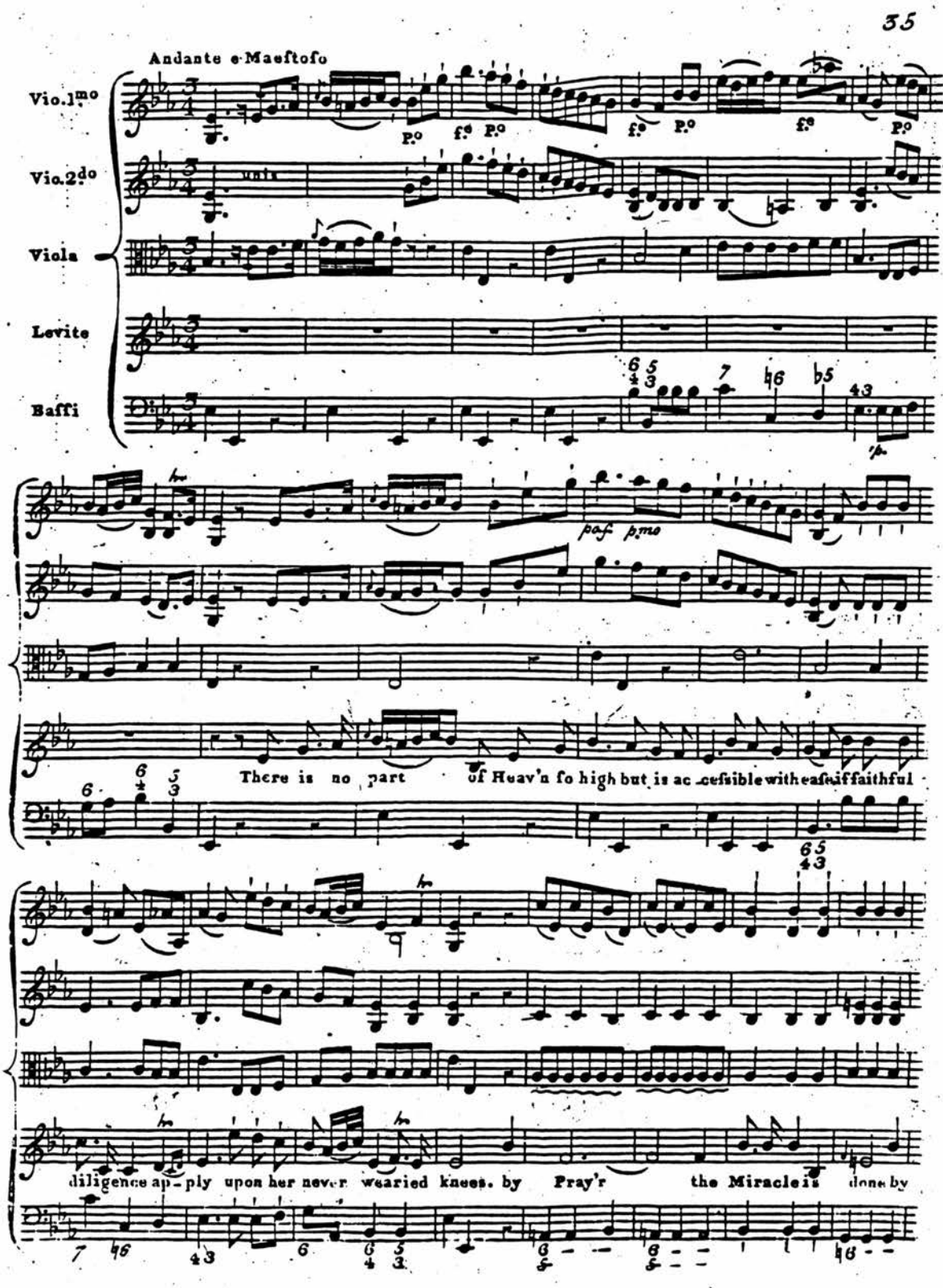
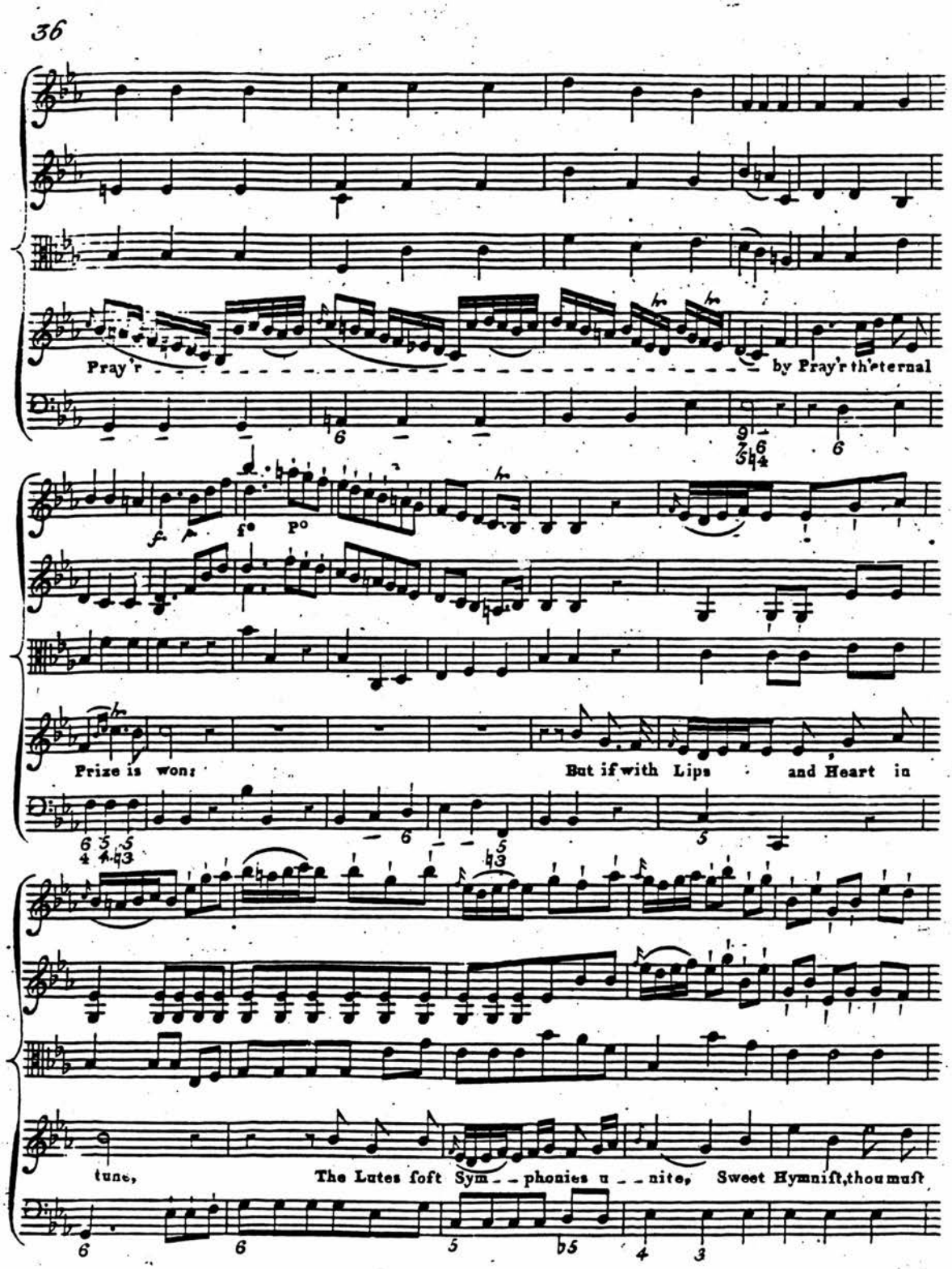
78 "Observations Occasioned by the Masque of Alfred", in Vol. II No. 6, 222-24,(pp. 223, 224).

of memorability the potentialities of Smart's narrative plan. Nor are individual numbers noteworthy, for they display for the most part the unmistakeable conventions and accidental accretions of a redundant operatic vogue. The Levite's aria "There is no part of Heav'n so high", for example (see Illus.XXII overleaf), bears closer stylistic affinities with opera seria than with the emergent expressive style of the late 1700s, which was less laden with coloratura and more diverse in its use of musical resources. The extravagant melodic embellishments on the word "pray'r" serve no dramatic purpose, and the orchestral accompaniment throughout, particularly the doubling of the melody in the strings, adds little harmonic depth to the scoring.

No composer of oratorios, both during and after Handel's lifetime, challenged the supremacy of the German-born master in this form. Speculation in retrospect may be to little purpose, but perhaps if Smart had dedicated himself to writing libretti some two decades earlier at the peak of Handel's career, and if circumstances had been otherwise, then his later biography might well have taken a very different course.



Illus. XXII. Hannah, "There is no part of Heav'n", pp.35-37 [reduced].



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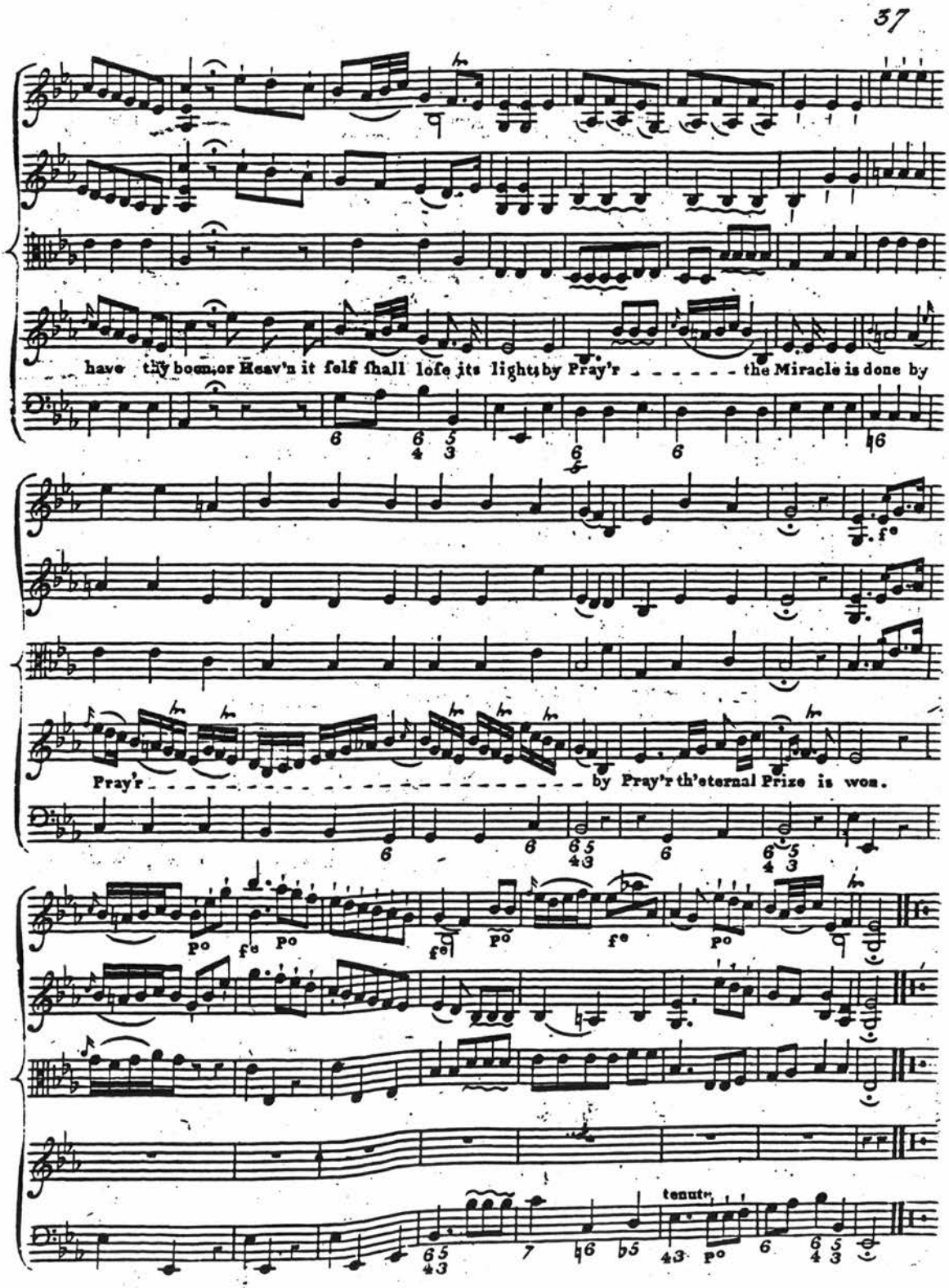

Illus. XXII contd.

CHAPTER TEN WORKS FOR CHILDREN

> For pray'r and hymns are mine employ,
> Who long for ever-wakeful joy.[1]

Hardly had the dust settled upon the corpse of Abimelech, than, on 30 March 1768, The London Chronicle announced the appearance of "A very proper Present at the approaching Festival, [Easter] for young Ladies and Gentlemen".[2] The work thus advertised was Smart's The Parables of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Done into Familiar Verse, with Occasional Applications, for the Use and Improvement of Younger Minds, which was dedicated to Master Bonnell George Thornton, the three-year-old son of the satirist and journalist Bonnell Thornton (1724-68). The elder Thornton's acquaintanceship with Smart was of long standing: he had been the main Oxford editor of The Student (1750-51), and had subscribed both to Smart's Poems on Several Occasions (1752) and to his Psalms translation of 1765 (two copies). In the course of a chequered career Thornton had promoted the short-lived St. James's Chronicle (1761), contributed miscellaneous essays and papers to the St. James's Magazine, and was a member of the urbane and self-commendatory

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1 "Hymn XX: Watching", st.VI.

2 Vol. XXIII No. 1761, 30 March 1768, p.309. Also in No. 1762, 1 April 1768, p.317 and No. 1763, 4 April 1768, p.323.

Nonsense Club. Among his more memorable remains was the burlesque Ode on Saint Caecilia's Day which the author modestly declared to be "not without Faults; tho' I cannot help thinking it far superior to the Odes of Johnny Dryden, Jemmy Addison, Sawney Pope, Nick Rowe, little Kit Smart, &c. &c. &c. or of any that have written or shall write on SAINT CAECILIA'S Day".[3] The parody retained sufficient notoriety to elicit the attention of Charles Burney who provided a musical setting, probably in 1760 or 1763.[4]

In his short dedicatory address to the Parables dated 24 February 1768, Smart described the fruit of his exertions as "a well-intended Work"; and the kindly prolusion also noted that "there is nothing so pleasant as Wisdom, and nothing so useful as Learning".[5] In respect of purpose, then, the volume bears some affinity with the later Hymns for the Amusement of Children. Evidence points, however, to impecuniousness as the governing impetus, for by publishing the Parables Smart could neither hope to consolidate his literary reputation nor expect any quarter from the major periodicals who had not forgotten the virulent

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3 Fustian Sackbut [Bonnell Thornton], An Ode on Saint Caecilia's Day, Adapted to The Ancient British Musick (London, 1749), "Preface", p.vi.

4 See Appendix I, in Roger Lonsdale, Dr. Charles Burney (Oxford, 1965), pp.485-90.

5 The Parables of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ (London, 1768), pp.v-vi; all quotations are from this first, and only, edition.

exchanges of a few years previous. Given this lingering antipathy, The Critical Review exhibited a commendable degree of restraint, even tacitly approving the poetic medium as appropriate to educate children in Divine truths:

> The work before us is of the lower class, [referring to the unequal quality of Smart's compositions] containing about seventy parables, and some other passages . . . in plain, familiar verse, adapted to the capacities of children; to whom it may certainly be of use, as it will serve to give them an idea of our Saviour's discourses, and furnish them with pious instructions; but it is not calculated to please their imaginations, or improve their taste in poetry, as the reader will perceive by the following specimen [prints "Parable XX: The Lost Sheep"].

The Monthly Review was less conciliatory, and falling gleefully on Smart's unfortunate dedication, dismissed the whole enterprise with scathing summariness: "This version of the parables is, with great propriety, dedicated to Master Bonnel [sic] George Thornton; a child of three years old". The editors printed "Parable XXI: The Piece of Silver" by way of illustration, concluding with scorn: "Familiar verse, indeed! as the title-page justly intimates".[6]

It is difficult not to concede that the substance, if not the tone, of these reviews was largely justified. The Parables is an extended work of one hundred and seventy-five pages, but this considerable length apart, it has the appearance of rapid composition, and its very existence only seems incumbent on

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6 The Critical Review, XXV (April 1768), 310; The Monthly Review, XXXVIII (May 1768), 409.

Smart's innate skill in metrics and poetic scansion. The previous year, moreover, had witnessed the publication of the monumental four-volume Works of Horace, Translated into Verse, and 1768 also saw Smart's collaboration on the ill-fated Abimelech. Furthermore, there was an acknowledged precedent for mechanical paraphrases of the Gospel which would appeal to a child's intuitive sense of rhythm without necessarily stimulating his more creative faculties. Robert Burton's Youth's Divine Pastime, for instance, comprised "FORTY remarkable Scripture Histories, turn'd into English Verse. . . . Also several Scriptural Hymns upon various Occasions", and simply followed the biblical narratives with the hopeful intention of inculcating virtue:

> Dear Children, Wisdom's Precepts learn,
> And hearken to her Words;
> She to all that obey her Voice,
> A glorious Crown affords.[7]

Smart's pedestrian versification is no worse than this and similar essays in the form, but his unvarying ictus and regular linguistic stress-pattern inevitably debase the limpid prose of the Authorized Version. Although critical severity should not dismiss the possible appeal of sing-song tracts to a child's assimilatory capacity, the assessment of Christopher Devlin seems barely tenable: "It is a most

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[7] Youth's Divine Pastime, Part One, 15th ed. (London, 1732), sig. A^{v}. The contrived syntax of the third line of Burton's verse paragraph indicates the quality of the whole.

meritorious work, straightforward and thoughtful".[8] Smart's design may have been a creditable one, but the resulting essays represent little more than doggerel. As one nineteenth-century editor has remarked, the Parables volume "exhibited a more striking proof of want of judgment than any of his [Smart's] late performances . . . and is written in that species of verse which would be tolerated only in the nursery".[9]

The seventy-three parables and ten additional versifications of New Testament passages which compose Smart's Parables are all disposed into rhymed octosyllabic couplets:[10] the same vehicle that he had adopted for his rendition of the fables of Phaedrus.[11] Some of the pieces merely versify the chosen lesson; to others Smart appends a rhymed commentary which points up the essential message implied in Christ's teaching. It would be pointless to look for incorporation of the poet's idiosyncratic beliefs

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8 Poor Kit Smart, p.176.

9 Alexander Chalmers, ed., Poems of Christopher Smart, in The Works of the English Poets, 21 vols. (London, 1810), XVI, 3-106 (p.13).

10 Smart explained his appendix to the Parables proper: "Though the following Passages of the New Testament be not Parables, yet as they are altogether pertinent to our present Design, we have not scrupled to insert them" — Parables, p.154.

11 A Poetical Translation of the Fables of Phaedrus (London, 1765).

in the parables themselves; indeed, this would hardly accord with his purpose which was simply to bring the Gospel scenes to remembrance before the child's eyes. The "Occasional Applications", however, sometimes rise above the merely contrived, and either express a fragment of Smart's religious ideology or hint at the nature of his own struggles and expectations. In "Parable III: The Kingdom of Heaven compared to a Grain of Mustard-seed", Smart's tetrameter couplet: "And all the songsters of the air/Take up an habitation there" (11.11-12) adds nothing to the biblical verse: "the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof".[12] But in the succeeding commentary he enlarges the mustard-seed analogy to a visionary tree of life and characteristically includes a chorus of celestial beings ceaselessly hymning the Trinity:

> And there his servants shall partake
> The mansions, that the branches make;
> There saints innumerable throng,
> Assert their seat, and sing their song.
> (11.23-26)

Smart's extension of the melodious birds into choirs of angels also recalls "Hymn VI: The Presentation of Christ in the Temple" from his Hymns and Spiritual Songs (1765), in which Christ is imaginatively depicted as a phoenix of unsurpassing beauty lodging in the "tree" of Eternity:

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[12] Matthew 13.32; also Mark 4.32 and Luke 13.19.

> Ere yet from guile and hate profest,
> The phenix makes his fragrant nest
> In his own paradise above.
> (st. XVI)

And several passages in Jubilate Agno, as "Let Ready, house of Ready rejoice with Junco The Reed Sparrow. blessed be the name of Christ Jesus Voice & Instrument" (D.175) conjoin avian life and musical adoration of the Divine.[13]

Such association, however, which goes beyond the immediate context, is rare, and the musical imagery in the Parables is overwhelmingly derivative. In "Parable XIV: The Fig-tree", Smart's vision of the Son of Man in His glory is taken from Matthew 24.31; compare "And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet"[14] with Smart:

> With all the host of heav'n around,
> And in stupendous glory crown'd;
> And then he shall th'angelic band
> With the shrill trumpet's voice command. . . .
> (11.11-14)

"Parable XXIV: The Prodigal Son" again reproduces the language used by Luke to describe the elder son's return from the fields to be greeted with the sound of melody and rejoicing; compare "as he . . . drew nigh to the house, he heard musick and dancing" (Luke 15.25) with Smart:

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13 Note D.199, D.205 and D.223; see also "Hymn XXV: Mirth", st. V, in Hymns for the Amusement of Children, ed. E.[dmund] B.[lunden] (3rd ed., 1775; facsimile rpt. Oxford: Luttrell Society, 1947).

14 See also Mark 13.27 and Luke 21.27. Only Matthew specifically employs the trumpet image.

> . . . the elder son,
> Who then was in the field advanc'd,
> And heard them, as they sung and danc'd. . . .
> (11.52-54)[15]

In "Parable XXXIV: The Children in the Market-Place" Smart's lines, "'We have tun'd/Our pipes, and ye no measure kept'" (11.6-7), recapitulate the scriptural phraseology, "We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced" (Matthew 11.17),[16] and in "Parable LXVI: The Woman and her seven Brethren", the biblical "resurrection" (Matthew 22.30) is given the periphrasis "trump's reviving blast" (1.14), in order, one conjectures, to expand the couplet to the required number of syllables.[17]

One small amplification which almost passes unnoticed is found in "Parable LV: The Harvest and Labourers". Here Luke's interpretation of Christ's words: "pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest" is rendered by Smart as "Press then the Lord by pray'r and song,/ (To whom both toil and fruit belong)" (11.15-16).[18] His inclusion of musical entreaty allows Smart to create his favourite alliterative and doctrinal doublet of prayer and praise. Finally, in

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15 Note Jubilate Agno, B1.15: "For I am come home again, but there is nobody to kill the calf or to pay the musick".

16 See also Luke 7.32.

17 Note Mark 12.25: "rise from the dead", and Luke 20.35: "resurrection".

18 Luke 10.2; also Matthew 9.38.

"Parable LXIV: The Head-Stone in the Corner", Smart particularizes the biblical "scriptures"[19] as "THE Lord did thus bespeak the throng,/'Have ye not read in David's song?'" (11.1-2). He alludes to the source of the corner-stone image in the book of Psalms (Psalm 118.22), and predictably introduces the name of his revered alter ego.

To conclude, there is little to detain the reader of Smart's Parables. The poems have little intrinsic merit in themselves, and the stilted syntax and convolutions which intrude upon the overall attempts at simplicity, do little to illuminate the prose of the Authorized Version. The few musical allusions are subject, in the main, to the same compression and occasional stylistic oddities that characterize the whole. Their function, moreover, remains peripheral to the limited theological and ethical interest which may be gleaned from individual parables. For all Smart's didacticism and judicious apposition of subject and illustration, the work may perhaps best be seen as a forerunner to the more accomplished and original Hymns for . . . Children volume which was to appear some three years later.

The failure of Abimelech, together with the critical reception given the Parables, would only have deepened Smart's despair and compounded his misfortune. Although in mid-April 1770 he was still at liberty, his financial position was

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[19] Matthew 21.42; also Mark 12.10, Luke 20.17 and Acts 4.11.

ominous and his freedom correspondingly precarious. He had, moreover, been gravely disappointed in an anticipated inheritance following the death of his cousin Francis Smart in 1768, to whose property he confidently believed himself entitled: "tho' by the Death of Frank Smart I am direct heir to an Estate of six hundred pounds a year: but so obstinate is my adversity, that a thousand obstacles are thrown in the way of my just claim".[20] His outstanding debts were numerous, and in continued default of payment they closed around him inexorably; on 20 April 1770 he was arrested "'in a plea of trespass on the case'",[21] at the suit of one James Bright who was in possession of Smart's promissory note for £19.19.6d. He was subsequently detained on 26 April in the King's Bench Prison, thus discharging with shocking exactitude the early prediction of his fellow-Cantabrigian Thomas Gray: "all this, you see, must come to a Jayl, or Bedlam, & that without any help, almost without Pity".[22] From his premises of detention Smart wrote to an unnamed correspondent: "After being six times arrested: nine times in a spunging house: and three times in the Fleet-Prison, I am at last happily arrived

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20 Letter to Paul Panton of 2 January 1769, quoted in Cecil Price, "Six Letters by Christopher Smart", RES, NS, VIII No. 30 (1957), 144-48 (p.148); also in Sherbo, Christopher Smart, p.252. See Devlin, pp.177-81.

21 W.H. Bond, "Christopher Smart's Last Years", TLS, 10 April 1953, p.237.

22 Correspondence of Thomas Gray, ed. Paget Toynbee and Leonard Whibley, 3 vols. (Oxford, 1935), I, 275.

at the King's Bench".[23]

Following recommital in February 1771 when the action was inevitably proved against him, Smart's brother-in-law Thomas Carnan, possibly in collaboration with Charles Burney, procured the "Rules" of the confine which permitted him some liberty of movement. Bereft of former supporters, however, Smart's health was in decline and his circumstances increasingly desperate as an affecting note to Rev. Jackson, penned shortly before his (Smart's) death, discloses: "Being upon the recovery from a fit of illness, and having nothing to eat, I beg you to lend me two or three shillings, which (God willing) I will return, with many thanks, in two or three days".[24] The circumstances of these final few months were recorded by Fanny Burney in her characteristic blend of measured altruism and filial obeisance:

> With failure at the root of every undertaking, and abortion for the fruit of every hope, Kit Smart finished his suffering existence in the King's Bench prison; where he owed to a small subscription, of which Dr. Burney was at the head, a miserable little pittance beyond the prison allowance; and where he consumed away the blighted remnant of his days, under the alternate pressure of partial aberration of intellect, and bacchanalian forgetfulness of misfortune.[25]

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23 Quoted in Lonsdale, p.69.

24 The Gentleman's Magazine, XLIX (July 1779), 539.

25 Madame D'Arblay, Memoirs of Doctor Burney, 3 vols. (London, 1832), I, 279-80; also tabulated in The Early Diary of Frances Burney 1768-1778, ed. Annie Raine Ellis, 2 vols. (London, 1889), I, 126-27.

Smart was never released from the debtors' gaol and died from chronic hepatic collapse on 20 May 1771.

Notwithstanding Fanny Burney's plausible exoneration — "His intellects, so cruelly impaired, I doubt not, affected his whole conduct"[26] — Smart was able to compile, between the date of his incarceration and December 1770, a last work: the compact duodecimo entitled Hymns for the Amusement of Children which he dedicated to "His Royal Highness Prince Frederick, Bishop of Osnabrug", then six years old.[27] The slender volume was entered at Stationers' Hall by Carnan on 24 December 1770, and its appearance (under anonymous authorship) announced three days later in The Public Advertiser.[28]

In his "Bibliography of Smart" published in 1903, G.J. Gray noted under [Item] LIII - Hymns for the Amusement of Children - that the third edition (1775) which furnished the details of his entry, was "in the Bodleian Library, and I

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26 Early Diary, loc.cit.

27 "Dedication" to frontispiece; all quotations are from the 1775 edition (facsimile rpt., 1947).

28 The Public Advertiser, No.11273, 27 December 1770: "This Day is publish'd . . . Hymns for the Amusement of Children: Embellished with Cuts" [fol.2^{v}]. See Appendix II: "A List of the Books Published by the Newberys from 1740 to 1800", in Charles Welsh, A Bookseller of the Last Century (London, 1885), pp.239, 308. Anonymity of publication was undoubtedly adopted as a precautionary measure to avoid alerting Smart's unsecured creditors.

know of no other copy of this or any earlier edition".[29] This hiatus was modified by Robert E. Brittain, who, in 1941, drew attention to the unique 1791 Philadelphia reprint, generally unacknowledged by Smart scholars, and which also incorporated Watts's Divine Songs.[30] Fourteen years later, Karina Williamson detailed the Dublin edition of 1772 (authorship anonymous) and collated the textual variants existing between this, the 1775 volume and an imperfect copy in private possession.[31] Both editions (1772 and 1775) reproduced simple wood-cut engravings illustrative of the accompanying hymn, and the 1772 text contained, in addition, an Appendix ("Not to the London Edition") of sixteen further hymns and a verse paraphrase of The Lord's Prayer. This copy was also reproduced in facsimile, in 1973.[32] None of Smart's hymns was sufficiently "acceptable to the Reader" to merit inclusion in Hunter's edition of 1791,[33]

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29 "A Bibliography of the Writings of Christopher Smart", Transactions of the Bibliographical Society, VI (February 1903), 269-303 (p.299).

30 "Christopher Smart's 'Hymns for the Amusement of Children'", The Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America, XXXV (1941), 61-65.

31 "Another Edition of Smart's Hymns for the Amusement of Children", The Library, fifth series, X No. 4 (December 1955), 280-82.

32 Hymns for the Amusement of Children, introd. Thomas L. Minnick (Dublin, 1772; facsimile rpt. Menston, Yorkshire: Scolar Press, 1973).

33 The Poems of the Late Christopher Smart, ed. Rev. Christopher Hunter, 2 vols. (Reading, 1791), I, xliii.

although The Gentleman's Magazine printed an imperfect version of "Hymn XXXII: Against Despair", which the editors entitled: "Extempore By the late C. Smart, in the King's Bench, on hearing a Raven croak". The two quatrains appeared as follows:

> YON Raven once an acorn took
> From Romney's stoutest, tallest tree;
> He hid it by a limpid brook,
> And liv'd another oak to see.
>
> Thus Melancholy buries Hope,
> Which Providence keeps still alive;
> Bids us with affliction cope,
> And all anxiety survive.[34]

It is likely, both from internal and circumstantial evidence, that the majority, if not all, of Smart's meditations were composed during his final term of imprisonment when the burden of thwarted aspirations would have been acute, and the realization of the squalid ignominy of his situation almost unbearable. Yet despite these overwhelming odds, the Hymns are inbued with a sense of forgiveness and trusting resignation which closely parallels that of Gray in the epitaph to his Elegy:

> O give me sense and grace to know
> Thy will, and check my own;
> In heav'n above, in earth below,
> The Lord is judge alone.
>
> ("Hymn V: Justice", st. IV)

> No farther seek his merits to disclose,
> Or draw his frailties from their dread abode,
> (There they alike in trembling hope repose)
> The bosom of his Father and his God.
>
> (Elegy, ll.125-28)

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[34] The Gentleman's Magazine, XLIX (September 1779), 464.

If the spiritual impetus to Smart's Hymns was the need to "find his soul again, to re-establish himself in childlike faith and hope and charity",[35] the material impulse was no less creditable. Smart had been estranged from his family for a number of years, but due to the efforts of his acquaintances Mason and Stonhewer, the possibility of some reconciliation had evidently been broached with Thomas Carnan. As step-son of, and successor to, John Newbery, Carnan was well-placed to intervene on Smart's behalf; the most likely gesture being an undertaking to see through the press any further poetical works. With considerable magnanimity Smart replied to his brother-in-law in a letter dated 16 April 1765, which acknowledged Carnan's "kind resolution" — in the absence of conclusive evidence generally construed as a publishing commitment — and which conveyed genuine humility on the part of the poet: "a first painful struggle to free himself from the interior straitjacket of his pseudo-messiahship".[36] Carnan's pledge to assist Smart was duly fulfilled, and the emergence of a third edition by 1775 probably reflected the assiduous efforts of the bookseller as much as the intrinsic merits of the poems themselves.

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35 Devlin, p.187.

36 Devlin, p.184. For the text of Smart's letter see Brittain, "Smart's Hymns", p.62.

Versification of scriptural and moral axioms for the young was not, in itself, an innovatory undertaking. As in his version of the Psalms and the Hymns and Spiritual Songs, Smart was writing within a well-established convention, and had, moreover, first composed a child's "hymn" some twenty years previous for inclusion in the Lilliputian Magazine, published by Thomas Carnan in [1752]. An early representative of the genre, first published in 1686, was Bunyan's Book for Boys and Girls, which comprised seventy-four short verse reflections on diverse subjects. Bunyan's purpose was set forth in his prolusory address, "To the Reader":

> While by their Play-things, I would them entice,
> To mount their Thoughts from what are childish Toys,
> To Heav'n, for that's prepar'd for Girls and Boys.

Accordingly, Bunyan fashioned his "sermons in stones" from homely, temporal objects, which through spiritualization could disclose a Divine truth or portentous moral. If in so doing the author imperilled his own reputation, then the cost was but lightly incurred: "tho I my self expose/To scorn; God will have Glory in the close".[37] Some anthologies were assembled for a specified institution as the Foundling Hospital, and contained psalm paraphrases and other hymns

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37 J.[ohn] B.[unyan], A Book for Boys and Girls, ed. John Brown (1st ed., 1686; facsimile rpt. London, 1889), sigs. A2^{r}, [A3^{v}]. Note also John Wright, Spiritual Songs for Children (London, 1727) and Thomas Foxton, Moral Songs Composed for the Use of Children (London, 1728).

and anthems deemed appropriate alternately to uplift and to admonish youth.[38] Other additions to "that branch of literature which proposes to itself the important object of pleasing and instructing children" were prose compilations, whose intent differed little from that of their poetic associates: namely, to "engage the minds of children to the improvement of their knowledge, and inspire them with an early love of virtue".[39]

The most significant and widely-cited precursor to Smart's Hymns, however, was Isaac Watts's Divine Songs Attempted in Easy Language, for the Use of Children, the phenomenal popularity of which was attested to by the number of re-printings subsequent to the first edition of 1715.[40] Watts was, himself, also writing within a literary tradition, the most notable exponents of which were Bunyan, Jeremy Taylor and James Janeway, and his volume, in turn, inspired further essays in the form. From

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38 See Psalms, Hymns & Anthems, Used in the Chapel of the Hospital for the Maintenance & Education of Exposed and Deserted Young Children (London, 1774).

39 The Children's Miscellany (London, 1788), pp.vii, v-vi. Note also T.H., The Child's Guide . . . for Children . . . [and] for Youth (Aberdeen, 1753): a small manual "with Prayers, Graces and Instructions fitted to the Capacities of Children". For further examples see J.H.P. Pafford, ed., Isaac Watts: Divine Songs (London, 1971), pp.5-13; Dearnley, pp.282-306; and Harry Escott, Isaac Watts (London, 1962), pp.199-216.

40 See Pafford, ed., pp.282-325. Re-publication reached a peak between the years 1775 and 1850; an unusually prolonged flowering for an early eighteenth-century work of this nature.

among these, Charles Wesley's Hymns for Children,[41] a severely evangelical collection and one somewhat simplistic in both tone and doctrine, has achieved a limited memorability on account of one or two of the lyrics. But in its time, Wesley's one-hundred-and-five-item compilation which was first published anonymously, proved of sufficient interest to have warranted two reprintings and three further editions by 1784.

In the case of Watts, however, the twenty-eight items which constitute the Divine Songs proper are supplemented by versification of the Ten Commandments, miscellaneous salutations and doxologies and a small number of moral exhortations and remonstrances. The Songs were prefixed with the inscription "Out of the Mouth of Babes and Sucklings thou hast perfected Praise" (Matthew 21.16), and were directed by the author to "all that are concerned in the Education of Children".[42] As in Smart's Hymns, Watts's work purported to combine pleasurable reading and instructive discourse with the ultimate object of inculcating virtue in the young. In his choice of diction Watts was both realistic and discriminatory: "I have endeavoured to sink the Language to the Level of a Child's Understanding, and yet to keep it ... above

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41 Published in Bristol, 1763. For further examples, see Pafford, ed., pp.326-30.

42 "Preface", sig. [A8^{v}]; all quotations are taken from the first edition, a facsimile reprint of which is included in Pafford's edition, pp.129-200.

Contempt",[43] an attitude particularly commended by Dr. Johnson in his "Life" of the eighteenth-century hymn-writer.[44]

Notwithstanding his laudable purpose which instituted praise for the providence and revealed excellencies of God as a dominant theme, Watts's catechism is soon revealed to be overwhelmingly didactic in a negative sense, for the vision of damnation is held continually before the child's gaze. As early as "Song II: Praise for Creation", Watts presents a God Who not only illuminates heaven with His radiance, but also thunders "With Wrath in Hell beneath" (st. VII). "Song III: Praise to God for our Redemption" chronicles Man's Fall "To Death, and near to Hell" (st. II) in verses reverberant with Stygian epithets: "ruin'd Race" (st. I), "forbidden Fruit" (st. II), "Transgressors doom'd to die" (st. V), "slavish Chains/Of Satan, and of Sin" (st. VI). "Song IV: Praise for Mercies" evokes a Blakean dichotomy of well-being and poverty; "Song V" recalls the "endless Pains" (st. IV) and "Eternal Fire" (st. V) of hell; songs VI to VIII record the unenviable fate of the unbeliever, and "Song IX: The All-seeing God" opens with an invocation weighty in self-condemnation:

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43 "Preface", sig. [A10^{r}].

44 Lives of the English Poets, ed. George Birkbeck Hill, 3 vols. (Oxford, 1905), III, 302-11. Note: "A voluntary descent from the dignity of science is perhaps the hardest lesson that humility can teach" (p.308).

Almighty God, thy piercing Eye
Strikes thro' the Shades of Night,
And our most secret Actions lie
All open to thy Sight.

There's not a Sin that we commit,
Nor wicked Word we say,
But in thy dreadful Book 'tis writ
Against the Judgment-Day.

"Song X" is entitled "Solemn Thoughts of God and Death", and number XI, "Heaven and Hell", and the unholy trinity of "sin", "death" and "hell" surface again in "Song XII". "Song XIII" counsels against the "Danger of Delay":

What if his [God's] dreadful Anger burn,
While I resist his offered Grace,
And all his Love to Fury turn,
And strike me dead upon the place?
(st. IV)

and numbers XV to XXII are all directed "Against" some childish foible. Even "Song XXV: A Morning Song" pleads that the forthcoming day should not be "spent in vain" (st. IV), and the unsuspecting child, turning to its companion-piece, "An Evening Song", only discovers that, in fact, it has:

But how my Childhood runs to waste!
My Sins, how great their Sum!
Lord, give me Pardon for the past,
And Strength for Days to come.
(st. II)

To turn to Smart's Hymns after those of Watts is to discover little of the earlier writer's retributive zeal which assumed firstly, the child's inherently corrupt nature, and secondly, that his every action or thought carried within it the potentiality of damnation. In Smart's "Hymn XXXV:

At Dressing in the Morning", for instance, in place of Watts's prohibitory injunctions the child asks that he might serve others in a spirit of eagerness and with a tune on his lips:

> O make me useful as I go
> My pilgrimage along;
> And sweetly sooth this vale of woe
> By charity and song.
> (st. III)

Smart's "clothing" is dressing of the soul, and the child's "rod and staff" (Psalm 23.4) are benevolence and musical worship. Nevertheless, Smart's verses have, as Marcus Walsh states, "an avowedly pedagogical purpose, 'a plan,/ To make good girls and boys'";[45] in this sense they are strongly allied to the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century convention of corrective writing. Donald Davie further points out that the Wordsworthian or Blakean conception of the child as in innate communion with esoteric wisdom and unrevealed truths is entirely absent, and that Smart upholds the broad Augustan view of the young as in need of tutelage and guidance to attain full maturity.[46] But to state that "Smart's 'Hymns for the Amusement of Children' are meant to help the children to stop being children" is to misconstrue a demonstrably optimistic philosophy which rightly acknowledged the importance of reform and self-control within an educative

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45 Marcus Walsh, ed., Christopher Smart: Selected Poems (Manchester, 1979), p.17.

46 "Christopher Smart: Some Neglected Poems", Eighteenth-Century Studies, III No. 2 (1969), 242-64.

design.[47] Although Smart shared his age's preoccupation with death and the transience of existence, his unaffected joy in all matter, both sentient and inert, aligns him more closely with Bunyan than with Watts.

A reading of Smart's Hymns undertaken in knowledge of his biography indicates a pervasive self-involvement and quiet self-knowledge that refine the unorthodox and egocentric theosophies of Jubilate Agno. The unmistakeable note of authorial identification lends added poignancy to a lyric such as ["Hymn XXXVII]: Pray remember the Poor":

> Whene'er the poor comes to my gate,
> Relief I will communicate;
> And tell my Sire his sons shall be
> As charitably great as he.

It is tempting to place this stanza, together with "Hymn XI: Beauty" ("And empty to the poor my purse,/Till grace to glory grows" (st. V)), alongside a passage in Fanny Burney's Memoirs: "In his [Smart's] latest letter to Dr. Burney, which was written from the King's Bench prison, he passionately pleaded for a fellow-sufferer, 'whom I myself,' he impressively says, 'have already assisted according to my willing poverty.'"[48] The opening line of "Hymn XVIII: Prayer" — "PRAY without ceasing" — recalls a familiar obsession, and a couplet from "Hymn XX: Watching" — "For pray'r and hymns are mine employ,/Who long for ever-wakeful joy" (st. VI) — is clearly

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47 Ibid., p.263.

48 Ed. cit., I, 281.

applicable to Smart. The gentle pleading of "Hymn XIX: Patience":

> Teach me 'midst all the griefs below,
> This transient state, this world of woe,
> Submissive on my bended knee,
> To take my cross and follow Thee.[49]
> (st. VI)

suggests that the poet himself has undergone the purgative fires of suffering to become, once again, childlike, and this tone of tranquil self-surrender is everywhere present throughout the volume.

In language and configuration the lyrics comprising Hymns for Children are appropriately simple, without lapsing into mawkishness or monotony. There are occasional reminders of Smart's distinctive prosody, and his characteristic "artifice of recherché archaism in diction" is by no means absent.[50] A phrase such as "And still peculiar on my side" ("Hymn V: Justice", st. II) is not readily understandable until a line from the "Adoration" stanzas in the Song is recalled: "And quick peculiar quince" (st. LIX). And Geoffrey Grigson in noting the "somewhat exhausted simplicity" of his [Smart's] last effort of praise",[51] suggests that the

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49 Compare A Song to David, st. LXXX: Jubilate Agno, B1.177, 268-69; B2.352; C.108-9. Note Hunter, ed.: "His piety was exemplary and fervent . . . Mr. Smart, in composing the religious poems, was frequently so impressed with the sentiment of devotion, as to write particular passages on his knees" (I, xxviii).

50 Davie, p.262.

51 Christopher Smart, Writers and their Work No. 136 (London, 1961), p.40.

combination of allusiveness and personal interjection in "Hymn XXIV: Melancholy" would bewilder a child's understanding:

> How to begin, and how depart,
> From this sad fav'rite theme,
> The man of sorrow in my heart,
> I at my own ideas start,
> As dread as Daniel's dream.
>
> (st. II)

But in the main Smart's Hymns are written in a consciously low style, quite removed from the sustained loftiness typical of his mature devotional essays. In this he followed the direction of Thomas Foxton who noted: "IT cannot be expected that Songs chiefly intended for the Use of Children, should have those glittering Ornaments which are requir'd in other Poetical Performances".[52] There is a sing-song repetitiveness that looks forward to Blake's Songs of Innocence, and the later poet's unadorned axioms seem anticipated by those pithy lyrics of Smart's which adopt a first-person narration.[53] Although the more formal hymns recall that awesome wonderment evidenced in the Seatonian effusions, there is less unremitting control over structure than in the carefully-wrought Hymns and Spiritual Songs of 1765. The technical devices of antithesis and balance — "My Saviour's blood, my Saviour's

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52 Moral Songs, "Preface", p.ix.

53 Smart's benediction on "The Jew, the Turk, the Heathen" ("Hymn IX: Moderation", st. III), for example, is close in sentiment to Blake's "The Divine Image".

tears" ("Hymn VI: Mercy", st. III); alliteration and sibillance — "the prophets sons of song" ("Hymn XV: Taste", st. IV): and unusual coinages — "The viol in my hand uprears" [rears on high] ("Hymn VI: Mercy", st. III);[54] to name but a few, are present, but more integrated with content. In passing, Smart's choice of "viol" as the secular instrument of Mercy (in this context a Divine quality) is perhaps unexpected, as the harp is more normally associated with beneficent spirits. His knowledge of musical instruments, however, is sufficiently generalized, and his compositional hallmarks sufficiently inconclusive, for the image to pass virtually unnoticed.

The moderation and artlessness that characterize the Hymns are more remarkable, given Smart's harrowing existence at the time of writing. In his introduction to the Dublin reprint Minnick suggests that both Smart and Blake "opposed the pitiless realities of their own London experiences with a pastoral ideal and hoped it might be realized in England through the example of her children".[55] This analogy provides an insight into Smart's birdsong imagery: "With white and crimson laughs the sky,/With birds the hedge-rows ring" ("Hymn XXV: Mirth", st. V), which may be usefully juxtaposed with that of Blake:

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54 Compare Jubilate Agno, Bl.242: "For HARPS and VIOLS are best strung with Indian weed".

55 Hymns (1772), n.p. [p.8].

> The Sun does arise,
> And make happy the skies;
> The merry bells ring
> To welcome the Spring;
> The skylark and thrush,
> The birds of the bush,
> Sing louder around
> To the bells' chearful sound. . . .[56]

But far from participating, by authorial design, in a dream-vision, Smart's song-birds have an immediate significance, for they exist by nature of God's love and as "musician[s] of the Lord" (Jubilate Agno, A.105), ceaselessly returning Him thanks. Smart also sees in nature's spontaneous minstrelsy a means of redeeming creation's fallen state. In "Mirth", "almost like the speech of an unusually wise and graceful child",[57] he completes his verse:

> To give the praise to God most high,
> And all the sulky fiends defy,
> Is a most joyful thing.
> (st. V) [58]

This credo is closely related to a premise that Smart had propounded in Jubilate Agno: namely, the efficacy of musical orisons in combating temptation and psychological darkness, and in leading the soul to heaven: "For prayer with musick is good for persons so exacted upon" (B2.304). It is hardly surprising that throughout the Hymns Smart should offer melodious praise both as an expression of

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56 "The Ecchoing Green" (11.1-8), in Songs of Innocence.

57 Brittain, ed., Poems by Smart, p.317.

58 The prophecy of Isaiah 65.25 looks to the New Jerusalem in which "Nature, red in tooth and claw" is harmonized into the mode of primal innocence.

gratitude and joy, and as counteractive to despair. In another passage which prefigures Blake, he pictures children celebrating the Sabbath in the midst of congregational worship:

> If you are merry sing away,
> And touch the organs sweet;
> This is the Lord's triumphant day,
> Ye children in the gall'ries gay,
> Shout from each goodly seat.
> ("Hymn XXV: Mirth", st. 1)[59]

And in "Hymn XXIV: Melancholy" he addresses the Divine Mediator:

> Tell us, for thou the best can tell,
> What Melancholy means?
> A guise in them that wear it well,
> That goes to music to dispel
> Dark thoughts and gloomier scenes.
> (st. VI)

A propos of this stanza Fr. Devlin cites a passage from the memoir of John Kempe (b. 1748) who attended Smart in his latter years, and by skilful flute playing imparted some peace to his distracted mind: "Smart loved to hear me play upon my flute, and I have often soothed the wanderings of his melancholy by some favourite air; he would shed tears when I played, and generally wrote some lines afterwards".[60] The "unhappy poet" was apparently a frequent visitor to the household of Kempe, who, according to his obituarist, "had indeed a great natural

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59 Compare Blake, "Holy Thursday": "Now like a mighty wind they raise to heaven the voice of song,/Or like harmonious thunderings the seats of heaven among" (11.9-10).

60 Poor Kit Smart, p.185. See "Memoir of John Kempe, Esq.", The Gentleman's Magazine, XCIII Part One (Supplement for 1823), 603-5 (p.604).

talent for music . . . [and] drew the sweetest tones from his flute".[61] As Smart wrote in Jubilate Agno with profound self-awareness: "I have a greater compass both of mirth and melancholy than another" (Bl.132).

Appearing at the very close of his life, the Hymns for the Amusement of Children also bring together those major themes integral to Smart's theological convictions. Most exalted in his ordering of merits are the virtues of charity, praise and gratitude; "Charity he invoked, praise he defined, and gratitude he elevated . . . to highest place".[62] An unusual turn is given "charity" in "Hymn XXVII: Good-Nature to Animals", which exhibits the gradually evolving attitude of humanitarianism: "Shall I melodious pris'ners take/From out the linnet's nest" (st. II). The corollary is discovered a few pages further on in "Hymn XXXIII: For Saturday". Here Smart conjoins mercy and praise, and opposes potential brutality with redemption through Nature's hymn.

> A lark's nest, then your play-mate begs
> You'd spare herself and speckled eggs;
> Soon she shall ascend and sing
> Your praises to th'eternal King.
>
> (st. II)

It is appropriate that he should choose the image of the mounting lark as messenger at heaven's gate, and also that God should hear the testimony of His tiny chorister; for

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61 "Memoir of Kempe", p.604.

62 Sherbo, Christopher Smart, p.263.

central to Smart's creed was his belief in the inter-relationship of life which binds the Maker to the least of His creatures. The child, too, participates in the movement towards universal love, for all humanity must, in its husbandry, help the song of the lower creation and raise it by awareness to a more loving worship of God. This conviction, which breaks through the strange excursions of Jubilate Agno and fashions Smart's response in all his mature religious poetry, is now distilled into the gentle precepts of his final years. This last-quoted stanza also points up a basic dissimilarity of approach between Watts and Smart. Whereas Watts interprets potential (or actual) misdemeanour on the child's part as leading to final judgement, Smart turns subjugation of the impulse into a means of salvation.

Even a summary review of Smart's religious poems reveals his preoccupation with praise: in the Seatonian poems, praise of God's infinite attributes; in the Hymn, praise for His restorative mercy; in the Psalms, praise for Christ's teaching; in the Hymns for . . . Children, praise for Christian example and morals; and in the Song, praise directed through the "SWEET PSALMIST OF ISRAEL" and returning to the Godhead.[63] Characteristically, therefore, Smart introduces the figure

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63 The accompanying engraving to "Hymn XVII: Praise", depicts a crowned figure symbolizing one of the elect, who is offering worship to the Almighty on a large, stylized harp.

of David into his penultimate hymn "Plenteous Redemption", for the Psalmist represents both the prototype and the pinnacle of the man-of-praise:

> DAVID has said, and sung it sweet,
> That God with mercy is replete:
> And thus I'll say, and thus I'll sing,
> In rapture unto Christ my King.
>
> (st. 1)

In "Hymn XX: Watching" Smart can claim, albeit through the persona of the child: "For pray'r and hymns are mine employ,/ Who long for ever-wakeful joy" (st. VI), and his rapture breaks through even the confines of "Hymn XXVIII: Silence":

> But if there be a point to praise
> Some godly deed of price,
> With all thy might thy plaudits raise,
> Here silence were a vice.[64]
>
> (st. V)

His most generous plaudits Smart reserved for "gratitude" which he personifies in the opening burst of Hymn XXII:

> I Upon the first creation
> Clap'd my wings with loud applause,
> Cherub of the highest station,
> Praising, blessing, without pause.[65]
>
> (st. I)

In this hymn, a "dance to the music of time", Smart assigns

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64 Note Jubilate Agno, B1.80: "For I bless God . . . for the voice which he hath made sonorous", and B1.89: "For I blessed God in S^{t} James's Park till I routed all the company".

65 Compare On the Omniscience of the Supreme Being (Cambridge, 1752): "And thou, cherubic Gratitude, whose voice/To pious ears sounds silverly so sweet" (ll.6-7). Note Jubilate Agno, B1.82: "For there is no invention but the gift of God, and no grace like the grace of gratitude".

"Gratitude" the post of joyful witnessing throughout the unfolding cosmic orders. "Gratitude" is heard at the Creation, she is diffused through the scents of Eden's "bloomy bowers" (st. II) and is witness to mankind's Redemption. She is of surpassing glory among those who wait upon God, occupying the highest station in the courts of praise: "I'm the Phoenix of the singers,/That in upper Eden dwell" (st. VI); and is revealed finally in the Divinity of Christ, invested in both the Incarnation and in eternity: "Wean'd from earth, and led to God" (st. VIII). Smart brings the metaphor to its apogee in "Hymn XXI" which expresses the mystic truth that through selflessness God's creatures come closest to Him. Appropriately, this lyric is cast in the rhyme and metre of A Song to David, and as with the hymn "Gratitude", moves from earthly cycles to heavenly planes, and finally equates "gratitude" with the person of Christ himself. There is a glimpse of Smart's sacramental interpretation of nature — the propensity of all living objects towards adoration — in his observation of the nesting song-birds: "'Not for themselves the warblers build'" (st. II).[66] But in Christ's total self-giving and patient love Smart sees gratitude's paramount embodiment. As Blunden states it, here "very nearly the diapason of Smart's conjectures and adorations of the supreme being resounds":[67]

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66 The 1772 edition cites a source in Virgil for Smart's images of this second stanza.

67 Hymns (1775), p.viii.

> O highly rais'd above the ranks
> Of Angels — he cou'd e'en give thanks,
> Self-raised and self-renew'd —
> Then who can praise, and love, and fear
> Enough? — since he himself, 'tis clear,
> Is also gratitude.
>
> (st. IV)

Indeed, the transcending motive throughout the Hymns is the in-dwelling Christliness of every human being: "There's God in ev'ry man most sure,/And ev'ry soul's to Christ allied" ("Hymn IX: Moderation", st. IV); hence Smart's exhortation to his young readers to recall their innate sanctity and to conform their childhood pattern to that of Christ's. "Hymn XXII: Gratitude" reveals in the life of Christ the model for Christian behaviour. But not content with merely restating what is in orthodox theology, an idée reçue, Smart sees inhering in a social quality a divine attribute, and in expressing this coalescence draws no distinction between correspondence and identity. He "tracks a creative affinity from common objects through the 'daedal earth' and universe to those hierarchies of cherubs and seraphs whom he loves to imagine in their supernal acts of worship. The spirit of delight is essential to his theology, and the hues of the garden and the voice of a bird are at once a gospel in his heart".[68] Smart therefore pays special tribute to those writers and musicians who record and sanctify material forms and disclose

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68 Ibid., p.xi.

their spiritual affinities:[69]

> The Psalmist and proverbial Seer,
> And all the prophets sons of song,
> Make all things precious, all things dear, [1772: clear,]
> And bear the brilliant word along.
>
> ("Hymn XV: Taste", st. IV)

He who responds to revealed wisdom and acts upon it with gladness is himself "most refin'd,/And polish'd by the Master's hand" ("Taste", st. VI).

To summarize, Smart's Hymns for the Amusement of Children were written primarily to bring "divine truths within the child's reach of understanding"; they compose, in toto, "a discourse on the two worlds, that of the senses and that of the spirit, as though the transition was not hard".[70] The lyrics express, therefore, the primary principles of Christian conduct and ethics, reflect on particular graces or situations, and exemplify a felicitous doctrine which encourages rather than affrights. In this they comply with their title: to "entertain with tranquillity, to fill with thoughts that engage the mind, without distracting it".[71] The importance of the poet's use of musical images and language throughout lies, then, in his restatement of complex convictions in a style readily accessible to the sympathies and understanding of the

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69 Note Jubilate Agno, Bl.258: "For nothing is so real as that which is spiritual".

70 Blunden, ed., p.xi.

71 Johnson, Dictionary, s.v. Amuse.

young. Notwithstanding the density and eclecticism which may underscore an image such as that of birdsong, Smart's Hymns speak to children overwhelmingly in the discourse of a child. And passages in Jubilate Agno which recall his association of music with children,[72] are here given an ordered and tangible poetic form.

The Hymns are also wrought from the squalor of Smart's plight and carry in their piercing plainness the pleas and admissions, the deliberations and self-communing of a lifetime of misunderstanding which was enlivened only by flashes of infused awareness and contemplative insight. Yet everywhere present is the conviction that the soul through prayer and praise may regain the skies:

> Repeat the Lord's own pray'r for grace,
> At ev'ry hour, in ev'ry place;
> Spring up from human to divine,
> For strength invincible is thine.
>
> ("Hymn VIII: Fortitude", st. II)

As the reader progresses towards the end of Smart's volume, through the deepening confidence of "Plenteous Redemption", wherein the resolution of "I must" is turned to the conviction of "I will", he senses in the final acclamation not merely the denouement of the child's pilgrimage, but the resolution of Smart's own spiritual odyssey: "Let no foul fiend retard your pace,/Hosanna! Thou hast won the race" ("The Conclusion of the Matter", st. II).

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[72] See B1 243, B2. 729 and D. 196.

AFTERWORD

> For I have translated in the charity, which makes things better & I shall be translated myself at the last.[1]

To conclude this survey of Christopher Smart's musical biography and theological verse, there remains one person in his life whose influence extended even beyond the poet's death in 1771. In this same year Charles Burney published The Present State of Music in France and Italy: Or, The Journal of a Tour, an account of his travels in Europe during the previous season. One passing reference recorded in Rome in September 1770, may appear of little significance. Here Burney mentioned, en passant, one Signor Corri, "an ingenious composer . . . [who] sings in a very good taste".[2] As a result of Burney's recommendations, however, Domenico Corri (1746-1825) was invited to Edinburgh by the Musical Society of that city, to conduct its concerts and to undertake related artistic commissions. Corri arrived in Edinburgh in 1771 and remained there for eighteen years, establishing various publishing concerns before moving permanently to London in 1790.

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1 Jubilate Agno, Bl.11.

2 The Present State was published in London, 1771; the reference to 21 September is on p.258.

During his years in Edinburgh, Corri composed and arranged many songs, the two most significant collections of which were a compendium of Scots airs,[3] and a selection of the "Most Admired Songs, Duetts, &c." then in existence.[4] He also penned a number of ballads which are noteworthy for providing written-out accompaniments for the harpsichord, many of which incorporate an Alberti bass. These songs demonstrate the transition from the former practice of appending realized (or unrealized) figured basses, towards devising a continuous integrated figuration that was to become the stock-in-trade of accompaniments by the end of the century. Numbered among these songs is "Sweet William A Favorite Ballad: the Words by Christopher Smart A.M. Set to Music for the Voice, Harpsichord, Violin and German Flute".[5] The setting itself need not detain us; the $\frac{2}{4}$ pulse is not well matched to Smart's anapaestic rhythm, and the courant movement of the keyboard limits the opportunities for word colouration. For our purposes the interest lies less in the music, than in the fact that Burney should have brought Smart's stanzas to Corri's attention. Clearly the musicologist

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3 A New & Complete Collection of the Most Favourite Scots Songs, 2 bks. (Edinburgh, [c.1783]). This collection went into 4 editions, the last of which appeared in or around 1802.

4 A Select Collection of the Most Admired Songs, Duetts, &c., 3 vols. (Edinburgh, [c. 1779]). Burney's name is numbered in the list of subscribers that prefaces the volume.

5 Published in Edinburgh, [c.1785], under Corri's name; see Illus. XXIII.

Sweet William

A

FAVORITE BALLAD

the Words by

Christopher Smart A.M.

Set to Music for the

Voice Harpsichord Violin

and

GERMAN FLUTE

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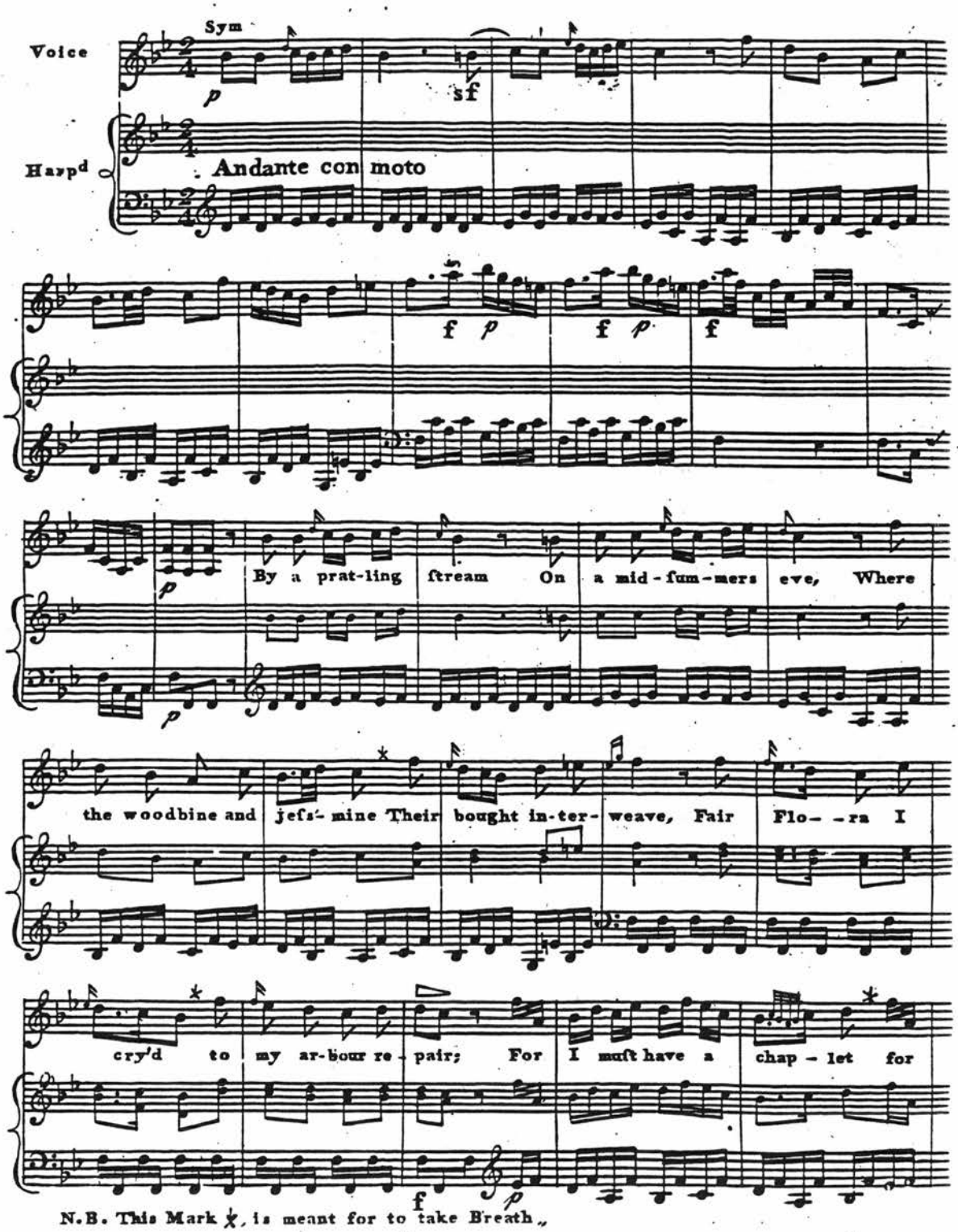
Illus. XXIII. Corri, Sweet William [c.1785] [reduced]. N.L.S.



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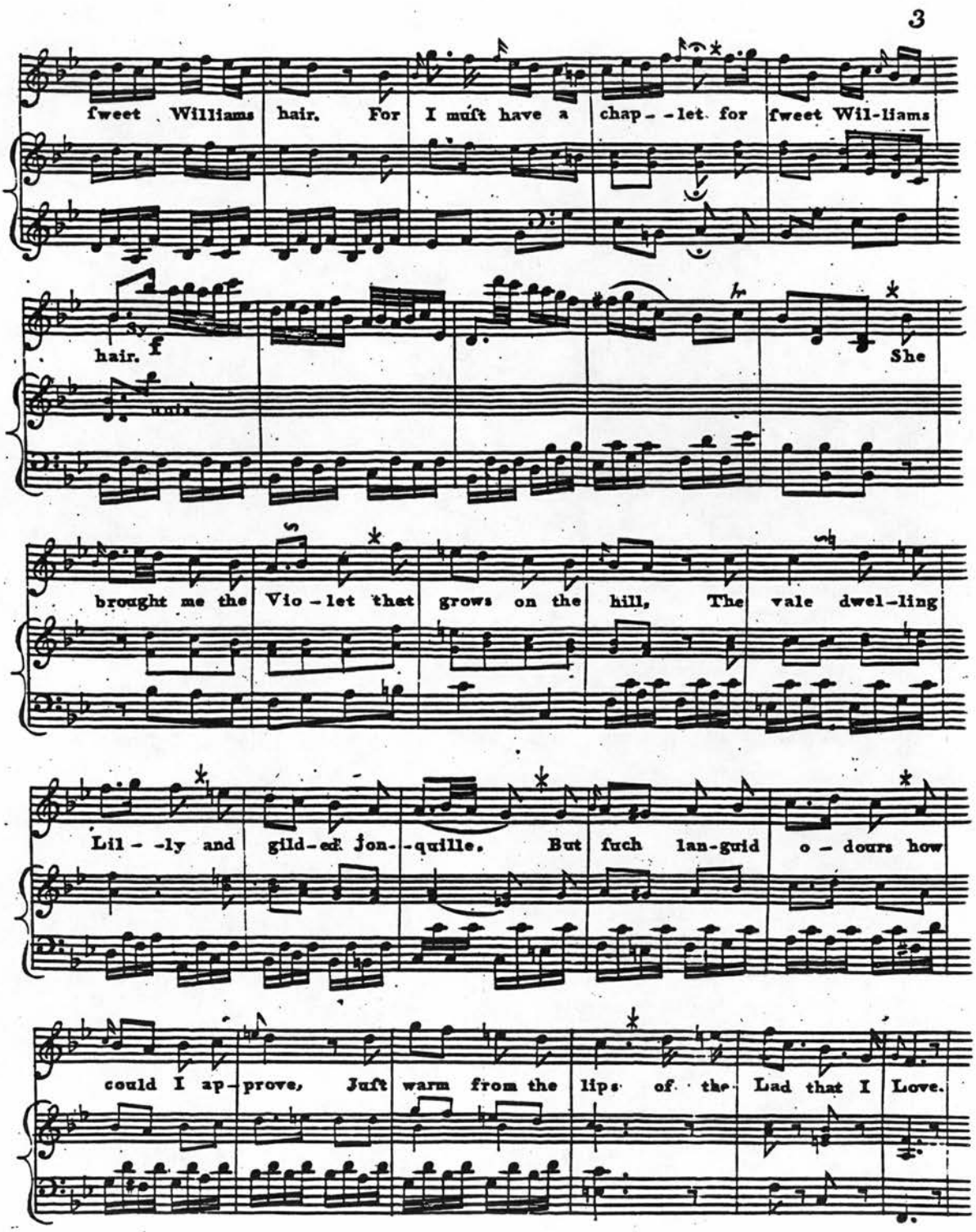

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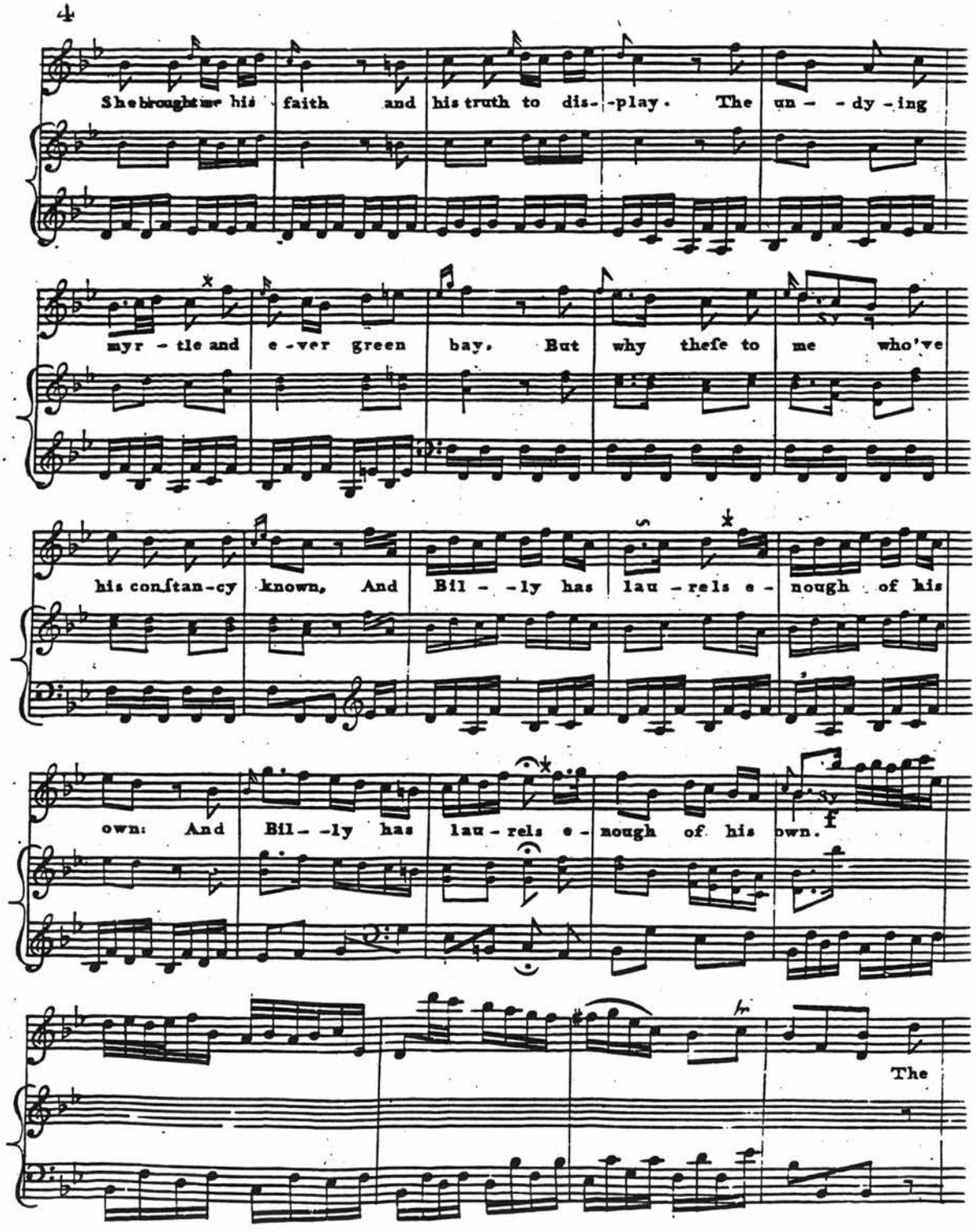

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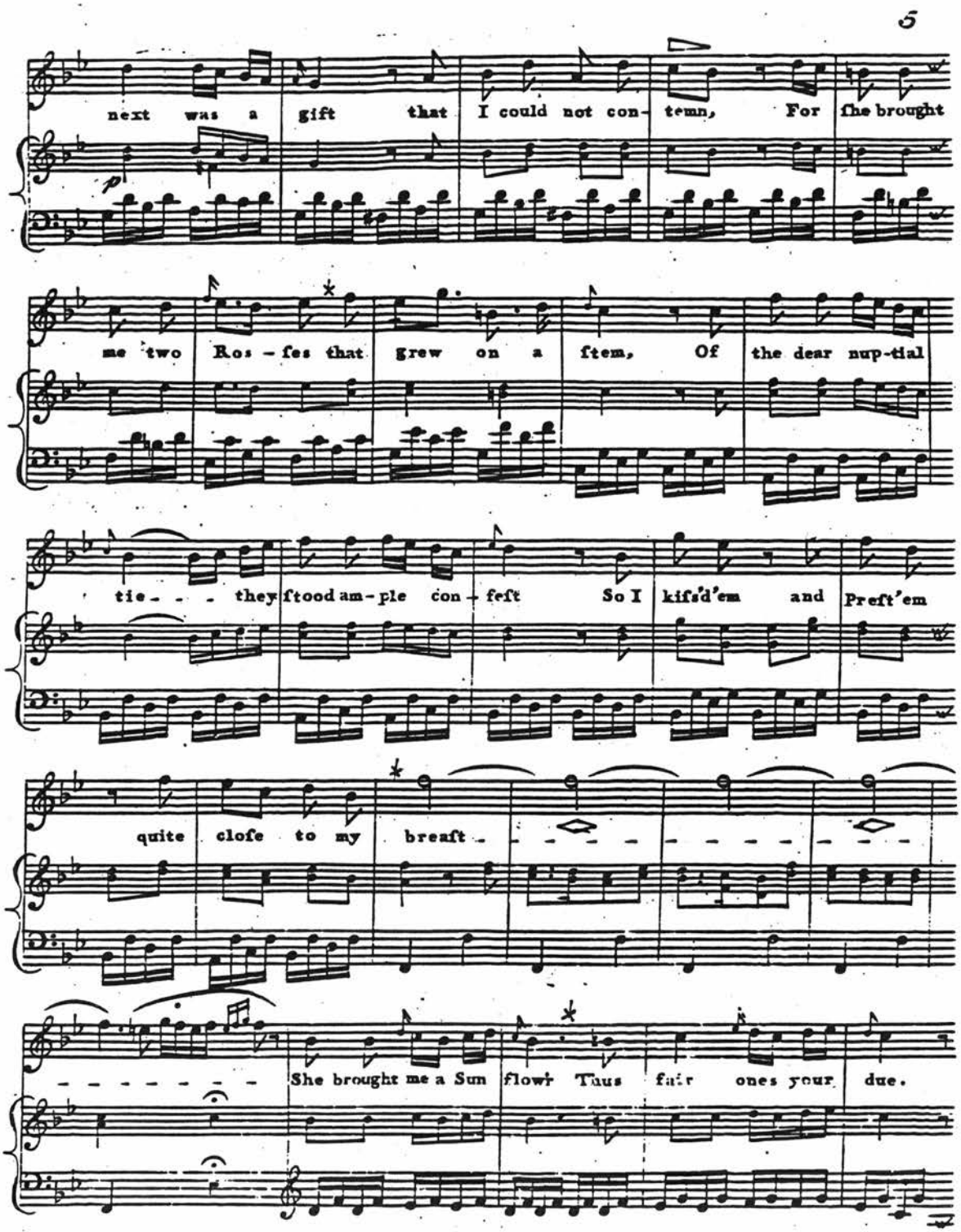

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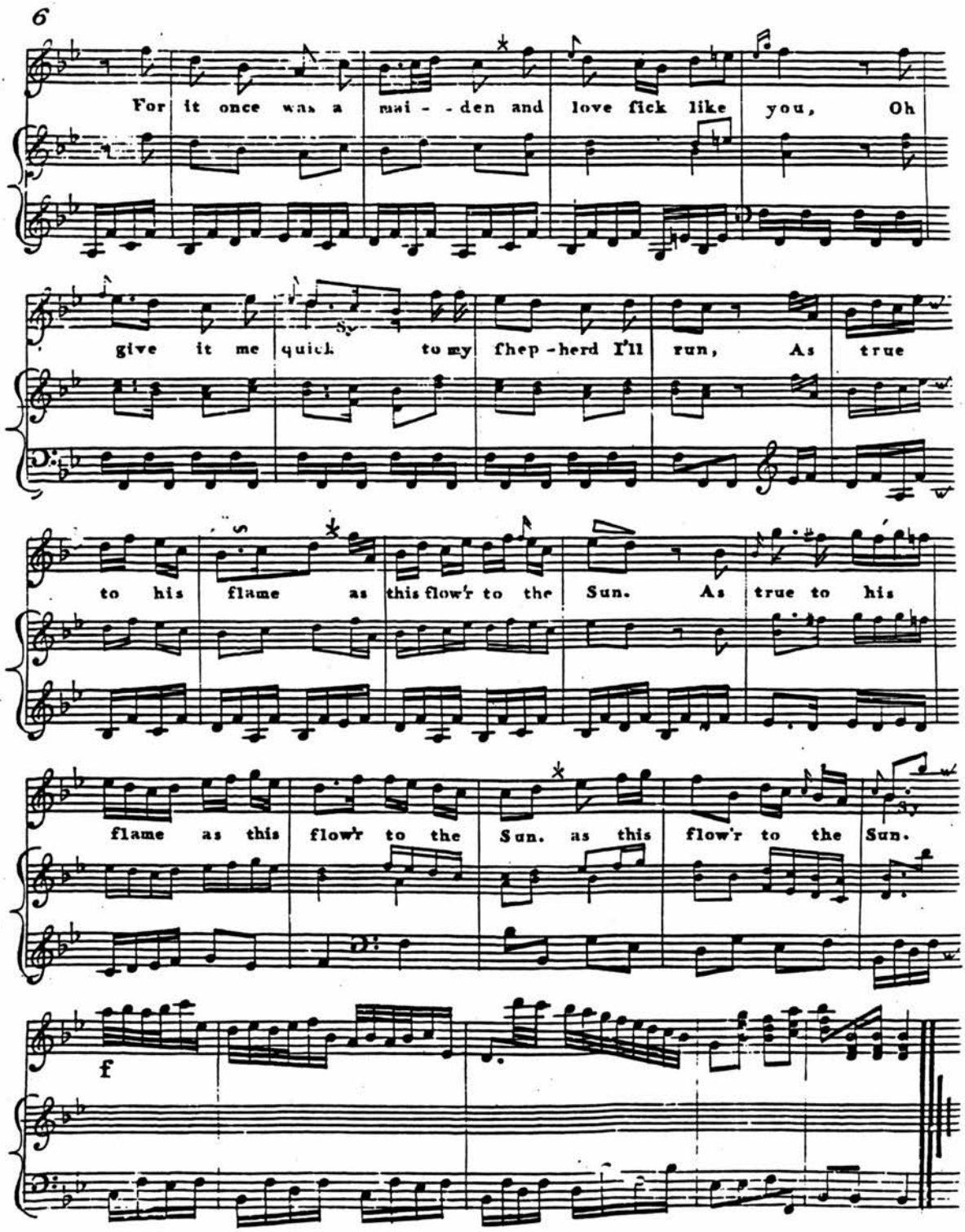

Illus. XXIII contd.

had not forgotten his former intimate, even more than a decade after Smart's death.

Indeed, there is scarcely a period in Smart's life from 1744 onwards, in which Burney does not figure prominently. The separate authorities of Smart's nephew and Fanny Burney state that he first introduced Smart to Newbery the publisher, his future father-in-law.[6] Burney's interaction with Smart from 1745 to 1756 has already been discussed; and it has been suggested that he contributed articles to The Universal Visiter when Smart ran into difficulties.[7] The celebrated conversation between Burney and Dr. Johnson concerning Smart's mental state in 1759/60 implies that Burney had not neglected to enquire after his friend;[8] indeed, he may even have thought of re-establishing a literary connection with Smart on his return to London from Norfolk in 1760. Fanny further notes that her father had "raised a kind of fund for his [Smart's] relief though he was ever in distress" during Smart's asylum years, and

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6 See The Poems, of the Late Christopher Smart, ed. Rev. Christopher Hunter, 2 vols. (Reading 1791), I, xviii; Roger Lonsdale, Dr. Charles Burney: A Literary Biography (Oxford, 1965), p.28.

7 See Roland B. Botting, "Johnson, Smart, and the Universal Visiter", Modern Philology, XXXVI (1938-39), 293-300. Botting's attribution of an article inscribed "Dr. B. to please A.G." [Anne Gardner] to Burney is probably incorrect (see Lonsdale, Dr. Charles Burney, p.67); though the possibility of Burney having written for the Visiter still remains.

8 See James Boswell, The Life of Samuel Johnson, 3rd ed. [ed. Edmond Malone] 4 vols. (London, 1799), I, 356.

records his visits to the Burney household in Poland Street following his release in 1763. In an entry for 12 September 1768 Fanny notes Smart's "extremely grave" demeanour, and the "great wildness in his manner, looks and voice"; and recalls how Smart in the previous year had "sent a most affecting epistle to papa, to entreat him to lend him half-a-guinea!".[9] It is also highly likely that Dr. Hawkesworth, who called on Smart in his later years, did so at Burney's instigation, for the two friends had first met in the 1740s and maintained their relationship throughout the succeeding two decades.

During one of Smart's visits in 1769, Fanny was prompted to reflect upon the uncharitableness of "The Critical Reviewers, ever eager to catch at every opportunity of lessening and degrading the merit of this unfortunate man".[10] Her words recall the derision with which Smart's post-asylum pieces had been received by the major London periodicals. But one opportunity of redress was provided by the publication of Hunter's two-volume edition of Smart's poems in 1791; and a lengthy assessment appeared in The Monthly Review of the following year.[11] This critique is now known to be

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9 The Early Diary of Frances Burney 1768-1778, ed. Annie Raine Ellis, 2 vols. (London, 1889), I, 126, 24.

10 Ibid., I, 60.

11 The Monthly Review; Or, Literary Journal, Enlarged, VII (1792), 36-43. See Roger Lonsdale, "Dr. Burney and the Monthly Review", Part Two, RES, NS, XV No. 57 (1964), 27-37.

the work of Burney, who, in view of his friendship with Smart, was placed in a difficult position. As there had been considerable altercation between Smart and The Monthly Review during the poet's lifetime, some summation, and where possible exoneration, of the various conflicts, was called for. Notwithstanding Burney's contention that Smart's religious fanaticism and carelessness of conception and presentation counted against him — "he never had patience nor application sufficient to bring a long work to any degree of perfection" — he could, nevertheless, close with magnanimity: "In all our bickerings, we never questioned his genius". As Lonsdale remarks, the substance of Burney's assessment clearly moved the Monthly Review's editor, Ralph Griffiths, who, conscious of his magazine's earlier dismissive treatment of the poet, responded warmly to Burney's judiciousness:

> You have not only well supported our Credit, as to critical Taste, but you have done honour to the Moral character of the M.R. your generous treatment of the Singular Mortal, & the Candid manner in which you have adverted to his faults, and misfortunes. In all this, you have contributed, very much, to my private gratification (the M.R. out of the question) by writing to the feelings of my heart: for tho' Smart used to call me hard names, as he did his friend Newbery, yet I would not, in revenge, have hurt even a hair of one of his cast off periwigs! — especially now, that, (poor fellow!) there is nothing left of him, but the "whistleing of a name". [12]

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[12] Griffiths to Burney, 31 December [1791], quoted in Lonsdale, "Dr. Burney and the Monthly Review", p.29.

Clearly Burney had succeeded in his task of balancing critical discernment with personal reminiscence. His account must have been gratifying to Smart's daughter, Elizabeth le Noir, for she dedicated her three-volume Village Anecdotes (1804) to the musicologist, as a token of her esteem. If Burney had felt constrained to dwell on the less admirable of Smart's literary and personal qualities, perhaps his final summation might serve both as a fitting epitaph to Smart's life, and as an appropriate conclusion to this thesis:

> His errors are those of a bold and daring spirit . . . it seems as if originality alone could try experiments. . . . Fowls of feeble wing seldom quit the ground, though at full liberty; while the eagle, unrestrained, soars into unknown regions.[13]

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[13] The Monthly Review, p.43.

APPENDIX I DAVID'S CURE OF SAUL

"It would not be right to conclude, without taking notice of a fine subject for an Ode on S. Cecilia's Day, which was suggested to the Author by his friend . . . that is David's playing to King Saul when he was troubled with the evil Spirit. He was much pleased with the hint at first, but at length was deterr'd from improving it by the greatness of the subject . . ." — from Smart's "Preface" to Ode for Musick on Saint Cecilia's Day (1746), [p. 24]. The incident to which Smart referred is related in 1 Samuel 16. 14–23: "And it came to pass, when the evil spirit from God was upon Saul, that David took an harp, and played with his hand: so Saul was refreshed, and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him" (v. 23).

The poet had already alluded to Saul's cure in the invocation of his fifth Seatonian Prize Poem On the Goodness of the Supreme Being (1756). Here David's inspired command over infernal spirits was celebrated briefly:

> — greater yet
> Was thy divinest skill, and rul'd o'er more
> Than art and nature; for thy tuneful touch
> Drove trembling Satan from the heart of Saul,
> And quell'd the evil Angel:-
> (ll. 7–11)

But there was no further specific mention of David's musical powers until the assured versification of the Song (1763):

Blest was the tenderness he felt
When to his graceful harp he knelt,
   And did for audience call;
When satan with his hand he quell'd
And in serene suspense he held
   The frantic throes of Saul.

His furious foes no more malign'd
As he such melody divin'd,
   And sense and soul detain'd;
Now striking strong, now soothing soft,
He sent the godly sounds aloft,
   Or in delight refrain'd.
(stanzas XXVII, XXVIII)

These stanzas may be favourably compared with the efforts of two other poets: John Armstrong, The Art of Preserving Health (1744) — "Such was the bard, whose heavenly strains of old/ Appeas'd the fiend of melancholy Saul" (Book IV, p. 133) — and Thomas Ellwood, Davideis (1712), who evidently fulfilled his declared intent to write "for common Readers; in a Stile familiar, and easie to be understood by such" (p. xi):

. . . and with a skilful Hand,
When Saul was troubled, on his Harp to play.
He did so: th'evil Spirit went away.
(p. 6)

Smart, however, was writing within a complete tradition of exegesis — scriptural, philosophical, musical and medical — that had formulated itself in relation to the biblical account. Among those commentators, representative of each genre, with whose works Smart may reasonably be assumed to have been familiar are Du Bartas, His Divine Weekes and Workes (1621), p. 421; Josephus, Works (1676), p. 159; Andrew Willett, [sic], An Harmonie Upon the First Booke of Samuel (1607), pp. 142-43;

Delany, An Historical Account (1740-42), I, 29; Richard Browne, Medicina Musica (1729), pp. 47-48; Cowley, Davideis [1656], Book I, pp. 12-13; Charles Jennens, Saul (1760), pp. 7-8; John Brown, The Cure of Saul (1763), passim; Mead, Yalden, Dalacourt, Trapp, Diodati, Hall and others.

In addition to these and similar passages which together form an expository background to the Song, oblique references in other of Smart's works help to define more surely his particular attitude to those healing energies commonly assigned to music. The "evidence" offered by the Ode for Musick on Saint Cecilia's Day must be discounted, for here the young poet was writing within a well-established convention that presupposed the rehearsal of certain universally accepted formulae. Elements drawn from classical mythology, Platonic speculation and theological and metaphysical hypotheses defined these assumptions, which were generally integrated into a type of pastoral pastiche, or disposed in a series of tableaux: cosmic, mundane and doctrinal exempla alternating without apparent incongruity or strain.

Nevertheless, that Smart was aware of music's associations with healing may be confidently assumed, for articles alluding to their inter-relationship were published in magazines with which he was closely identified: viz. The Midwife (1751, 1753); The Student (1750, 1751). In

an early work The Judgment of Midas (Poems on Several Occasions (1752)) he conjoined "The powers of Med'cine, Melody and Song", and music was similarly characterized as "med'cine of the mind" in On the Goodness of the Supreme Being (1756), l. 62.

That Smart considered harmony of particular benefit in relieving mental turmoil or dejection is corroborated by two poems from his last-published work, Hymns for the Amusement of Children (1771). In "Hymn XXIV: Melancholy", he suggested that music might "dispel/Dark thoughts" (v.6), and in "Hymn XXV: Mirth", he implied that musical praise, when God-directed, would "all the sulky fiends defy" (v.5). This last quotation recalls a theme discernible in all his mature religious works: namely, that music in its highest form could lead man to direct contemplation of, and communion with, the Divine.

Most indicative of personal conviction, however, are those Jubilate Agno fragments, too individualistic to be dismissed as mere pedantry, that assign to music a positive spiritual dimension: "For all whispers and unmusical sounds in general are of the Adversary" (Bl. 231); "For the TRUMPET of God is a blessed intelligence & so are all the instruments in HEAVEN" (Bl. 245). Closest in essence to the biblical account is that passage which describes God's ongoing, tuneful act of generation:

> For GOD the father Almighty plays upon the HARP of stupendous magnitude and melody.
>
> For innumerable Angels fly out at every touch and his tune is a work of creation.
>
> For at that time [when music is perceived as an actively creative force] malignity ceases and the devils themselves are at peace.
>
> For this time is perceptible to man by a remarkable stillness and serenity of soul.
>
> (Bl. 246-49)

In this remarkable foreshadowing of the Song, Smart has drawn a direct correlation between the revelation of Divine harmony and the restoration of fallen, "inharmonious" man. (It seems more than coincidence that the corresponding "Let" versicle to Bl. 248 includes the qualifying adjectives "pure and sweet" which Smart applied to David in the Song, stanzas IX, XXVIII, and LXXII-LXXIV). The expulsion of jarring impulses from man's being is coincident with the infusion of tranquillity and insight.

The restoration of equilibrium on a cosmic scale through the ordering power of music, finds a ready analogy, in minutiae, in David's healing of Saul. Smart placed the Israelite psalmist as privy to universal (Divine) harmony, in this manner justifying his ascendancy over a divided kingdom. The restoration of Saul's mental stasis answers this same idea, and, in the light of the last-quoted Jubilate Agno passage, becomes imaginatively, a "new creation". Sound, for Smart, is always a spiritual as distinct from a material

quality, and is closely associated with regeneration and purification:

> For the AIR is purified by prayer which is made aloud and with all our might.
>
> (B1. 224)
>
> For SOUND is propagated in the spirit and in all directions.
>
> (B1. 226)
>
> For the VOICE is from the body and the spirit — and is a body and a spirit.
>
> (B1. 239)
>
> For M is musick and therefore he is God.
>
> (C. 5)

David's physical attitude of adoration was also of concern to Smart, and again, versicles from Jubilate Agno balance lines in the Song. "For every thing that can be done in that posture (upon the knees) is better so done than otherwise" (C. 109), the poet wrote, anticipating his subsequent depiction of David: "to his graceful harp he knelt" (Song, st. XXVII); compare Psalm 43.4. And in the Song's climactic sweep, Smart's most exalted representation of beauteousness is expressed through the quality of humility:

> Beauteous, yea beauteous more than these,
> The shepherd king upon his knees,
> For his momentous trust. . . .
> (st. LXXX)

Most commentators when considering the nature of David's music, have concluded that he sang appropriate psalms or hymns to the accompaniment of his harp, and that these, together, wrought his cure of Saul. Patrick Delany, after enumerating the traditional forces ascribable to music, wrote: "IF such have

been the effects of the sole and separate powers of noble music, what might not be hoped from it, when it is built upon, and supported by, the noblest, the sublimest, the most heavenly strains of divine poetry, by which the world was ever delighted, informed, or amended! And such, beyond all controversy, or pretence of a rational doubt, are the sacred hymns and psalms of David" (An Historical Account, III (1742), 237). There is no reason to suppose that Smart thought otherwise. Moreover, classical writers — Tacitus, Annales; Nepos, Lives; Homer, Iliad and Odyssey; Polybius, History; Diogenes Laertius, Lives; to name but a few — recorded the alliance of song and instrument, an association which helped define the lyric form. Smart had honoured "the name of Christ Jesus Voice & Instrument" in Jubilate Agno (D. 175), and followed his poetic account in the Song (by itself, inconclusive) with a tribute to David's "hymns" (st. XXIX). In stanza LI he presents David as foremost figure in a choir of transcendent worshippers, and directs his final tribute to "the best poet which ever lived" ("List of Contents").

In conjoining music with silent intercessory prayer, Smart allied himself with those biblical expositors who had emphasized the limitations of an art unblest with a spiritual directive. As Delany recounted, it was the peculiar nature of Divine inspiration in the case of David, and the honours subsequently bestowed on him, that transcended the "learned

reasonings and quotations" (An Historical Account, I (1740), 27) of classical authorities on the subject. Smart therefore invests David with angelic status (reflecting an ennobled soul), by which means his song triumphs over his enemies. His manhood, on the other hand, is realized in union with "fair Michal" (st. XXIX) whose salutation affirms the capacity of music to engender love. Although there is no biblical authorization for Michal's commendation of David's music — compare I Samuel 18. 20 and II Samuel 6. 16 — in Jennens' libretto to Handel's Saul, first performed on 16 January 1739, Michal urges David to

> . . . take thy Harp, and as thou oft has done,
> From the King's Breast expel the raging Fiend,
> And sooth his tortur'd Soul with Sounds divine.
> (Act I, sc. 4)

Smart, then, evidently interpreted David's cure in terms of Divine commission: to answer those evil spirits inflicted on Saul as judgment. Saul's illness has been construed by most eighteenth-century medical authorities as a form of recurrent paroxysmal mania, and this accords with Smart's "frantic throes". As a direct result of David's ministrations, Satan's sphere of operation within Saul was reduced, and the monarch's afflictions thereby relieved. Music, thus prayerfully directed, could overcome dark impulses and heal psychosomatic disorders, though identification of the two may be assumed, since Saul's illness was consequential to sin; that is, it reflected his personal estrangement from God. Finally, sweet melody could turn aside wrath by imprisoning the listener's

"sense and soul", for it appealed both to his understanding (intellect) and to his heart (feelings).

Smart's graceful vignette in its alliteration and phrasal antithesis — "Now striking strong, now soothing soft" — conveys both the devotion of David and the restored harmony of Saul's consciousness. Whereas some contemporaneous accounts invested the biblical incident with an accumulation of emotional epithets — John Brown's Cure of Saul provides a notable instance — Smart's stanzas seem deliberately restrained, an effect partly attributable to the standard six metre which favoured that antiphonal contrast and balance he so widely cultivated.

To conclude, Smart's treatment of I Samuel 16. 23 is clearly founded on the same premises that influenced the writing of his contemporaries. Far from forming a generalized compendium, however, A Song to David also embodies many of Smart's mature insights and reflects his attempts to evolve a philosophy that would adequately express his spiritual ideality, unconstrained as it was by one particular dogma. Music, as part of this vision, represents a primal force that only realizes its full power when returned to its divinely-acknowledged origin. David, enabled by Grace to perceive the creative unity of existence, also symbolized for Smart a link between myth and ontology, temporality and eternity, knowledge and illumination. His cure of Saul must finally be seen not as one isolated narrative strand, but as integral to an understanding of Smart's theological vision.

APPENDIX II THE AEOLIAN HARP

> For ADORATION on the strings
> The western breezes work their wings,
> The captive ear to sooth.
> (A Song to David, st. LXVII)

The aeolian or wind harp derives its name from Aeolus, the mythical Greek god of the winds. Although its invention is generally attributed to the seventeenth-century Jesuit scientist Athanasius Kircher, the principle of secondary harmonics upon which it is constructed, was, in fact, known to the ancients, particularly in the east. The earliest Rabbinic chronicles in the Babylonian Talmud ([Tractate of] Berakoth) describe how the north breezes, arising at midnight, drew music from a harp (kinnōr) suspended above David's couch. Eustathius's Greek commentary on Homer, consulted by Pope in the course of his translation, alluded to a similar phenomenon, and it is further recorded that St. Dunstan (d. 988) was accused of sorcery on account of his experiments with such an instrument.

A short passage in Edmund Spenser's The Ruines of Time (1591) referring to the visionary harp of Orpheus, sets forth the archetypal mechanism: "Whilst all the way most heauenly noyse was heard/Of the strings, stirred with the warbling wind" (ll. 612-13). Warton's commentary on this seminal poetic representation noted that "What Spenser's imagination here beautifully feigns, is actually brought into execution in the Aeolian harp; the effect of whose musick is exactly what our poet describes" (Works, VIII, 308). Other veiled references

within the Elizabethan period are to be found in Shakespeare, in Cymbeline, IV. ii. 186-87 and King Henry IV Part One, III. i. 218-19.

Kircher's account is anticipated by that of Giovanni Battista Della Porta, whose Magiae Naturalis, published (incomplete) in 1558, detailed the substance of both the aeolian lyre and the camera obscura, another celebrated eighteenth-century contrivance. An English edition of Porta's compendium, Natural Magick . . . In Twenty Bookes, appearing in 1658, gave instructions on how "To make a Harp or other Instrument be play'd on by the winde" (Book XX, Chap. 7, p. 405). And John Wecker's Eighteen Books of the Secrets of Art & Nature (first printed as De Secretis libri xvii [sic] in 1582), contained an entry, "Of Secrets of Musick" (Book XVI, Chap. 21, pp. 295-96) that ratified Porta's findings. But it was to Kircher, apparently the first writer actually to assemble a windflügel, that the invention has generally been accredited. In the second book of his Musurgia Universalis (1650) he described, with diagrammatic assistance, harps of his own construction (Lib. IX, Magia Phonotactica, 352-53), and in his later Phonurgia Nova (1673) he discussed the more general concept of moving air exciting sound from box resonators (Lib. I, Pars 7, Cap. 10, pp. 142-49).

The effects of Kircher's experiments were by no means immediate, but he did arouse a measure of interest in the

aeolian harp as a piece of ingenious handiwork. P. Gaspar Schott, for instance, in his Magia Universalis of 1677 (II, Acoustica, Lib. VI, 348–53), reiterated the conclusions of his associate and developed further some harmonic and structural implications of the instrument. The inherent philosophical, as distinct from practical, potentialities of the aeolian harp remained dormant, however, for its appeal was largely synaesthetic and scientific. With its consonant and dissonant harmonies, forming and re-forming according to the changing pressures of the wind, the harp was a source of obvious auditory pleasure. And as a physical embodiment of the natural principle of sympathetic vibration, it fulfilled the early Augustan predilection for mechanical artifice.

Consequent to the publication of James Thomson's The Castle of Indolence in 1748, the possibilities of the aeolian harp began to assume a definite place in eighteenth-century affekton. Thomson had chosen the harp as the instrument for his allegory; appropriately so, for its performance required no human effort: "Wild warbling Nature all, above the Reach of Art!" (Canto One, st. XLI). His editor, elucidating stanzas XL and XLI, had noted: "This is not an Imagination of the Author; there being in fact such an Instrument, called Aeolus's Harp, which, when placed against a little Rushing or Current of Air, produces the Effect here described". The appendage of this commentary suggests that the instrument was still sufficiently unknown to require a description. A further six-stanza poem "An Ode on Aeolus's Harp", appeared in Dodsley's Collection of Poems (1748), III,

212-12 — Works (1750), II, 234-35 — and here Thomson invoked the "Aethereal race, inhabitants of air!" (l.1). An accompanying footnote asserted that a "Mr Oswald" was its inventor. Oswald, in fact, was an undistinguished Scottish musician who evidently re-initiated investigation into the mechanics of the aeolian harp, following the hint contained in Eustathius's Homer commentary; Kircher's model, however, remains the prototype.

In anticipation of Thomson's verses, Mark Akenside had enjoined the wind draw "unbidden strains" from "each repulsive string": The Pleasures of Imagination (1744), in Poems (1772), Book I, ll. 109-15. But Thomson's account of the instrument was the most explicit and the most widely-known, and Collins in his Ode Occasion'd by the Death of Mr. Thomson (1749) praised the earlier poet's "airy Harp" (l. 6) and added the footnote: "The Harp of AEolus, of which see a Description in the Castle of Indolence" (the reference was retained in The Poetical Works of . . . Collins (1765), p. 73). Within a few years, however, the wind harp had become so universally celebrated a symbol as to render further explanation unnecessary.

Smart in his satirical essay A Mechanical Solution of the Propagation of Yawning — Poems on Several Occasions (1752), pp. 167-77 — wrote: "Memnoniamque imitata lyram sine pollicis ictu/Divinum resonat proprio modulamine carmen" (ll. 70-71), which his translator, Rev. Mr Fawkes, rendered: "like Memnon's harp, in ancient times renown'd,/Breathing, untouch'd,

sweet-modulated sound" (ll. 86-87). And The Gentleman's Magazine, which first printed a letter detailing the harp's construction in Vol. XXIV (February 1754), 74, continued in the same volume (April 1754, 174-75) with a more extended account of the instrument. The writer, who styled himself Philo-Musicus, quoted from J. J. Hofmann's Lexicon Universale (s.v. Aeolium Instrumentum, I, 42), and concluded with "some inscriptions I saw upon one of them at a gentleman's seat in Norfolk". The unsigned verses are given here in full:

Inscriptions on an AEolian harp.

At one end.

Fingent AEolio carmine nobilem Hor.

At the other

Partem aliquam, oh venti, divum referatis ad aures! Virg.

On one side.

Salve, quae fingis proprio modulamine carmen,
Salve, Memnoniam vox imitata lyram!
Dulce, O! divinumque sonas sine pollicis ictu,
Dives naturae simplicis, artis inops
Talia, quae incultae dant mellea labra puellae,
Talia sunt faciles, quae modulantur aves!

On the other. Translation of the Latin.

Hail heavenly harp, where Memnon's skill is shown,
That charm'st the ear with musick all thy own!
Which, tho' untouch'd canst rapt'rous strains impart,
Oh rich of genuine nature, free from art!
Such the wild warb'lings of the chirping throng,
So simply sweet the untaught virgin's song.

The stanzas are those of Smart, as first printed in The Student (1750), I, 311. Although, as Geoffrey Grigson suggests ("The Harp of Aeolus", (1947)), the instrument spoke to Smart solely of "nature above artifice, of a rapturously

polite intoxication" (p. 30), the image re-entered his poetic consciousness a decade later during his confinement:

> For the Aeolian harp is improveable into regularity.
>
> For when it is so improved it will be known to be the SHAWM.
>
> For the strings of the SHAWM were upon a cylinder which turned to the wind.
>
> For this was spiritual musick altogether, as the wind is a spirit.
>
> For there is nothing but it may be played upon in delight.
>
> (Jubilate Agno, Bl. 250-51, 253-55)

Together with the preceding section Bl. 246-49, these passages parallel certain Neo-Platonic theorems which analogized the harp with "Plastick Nature": that moving force governing all cosmic creativity. "The whole Universe is as it were the Automatal Harp of that great and true Apollo; and as for the general striking of the strings and stopping their vibrations, they are done with as exquisite art as if a free intellectual Agent plaid upon them": [Henry More], Annotations Upon Lux Orientalis (1682), p. 129; (a metaphorical identification also suggested by Ralph Cudworth in The True Intellectual System (1678), I, 155).

Whether or not Smart's "improvement" of the aeolian lyre indicated an awareness "of its philosophical shortcomings" (Grigson, p. 30), he apparently strove to show that artful, as well as connatural, melody flows symphoniously to and from its Creator. His designation of "SHAWM" represents a not uncharacteristic lapse; this instrument was actually a double-reeded precursor of the oboe, as named by Spenser in

The Faerie Queene I. xii. 13.2: "With shaumes, and trompets, and with Clarions sweet". Smart presumably envisaged a stringed instrument of fixed, graduated pitch, such as the psaltery or dulcimer. Nevertheless, his incorporation of the wind harp into a mystical schematization goes beyond contemporary accounts, and anticipates its nineteenth-century extension into a paradigm for spontaneous imaginative impulse.

To most mid-eighteenth-century poets, however, the instrument of untutored harmony remained a musical curiosity, to be esteemed chiefly for its sensory delights rather than for any intrinsic philosophical potentialities. Predictably, William Mason included an ode To an Aeolus's Harp, in his Poems (1764), pp. 32-33 (first printed in Dodsley's Collection of Poems, (1758), IV, 267-68). In the mannered bromides of his verse — "With many a warble wild, and artless air" — the inheritance of Thomson may be clearly discerned. Erasmus Darwin employed the image in his verse-essay The Botanic Garden (1791) — Part One, The Economy of Vegetation, p. 181: "when Zephyr rings/The Eolian Harp" — and Thomas Gray mentioned its effects in the course of his epistolary writing: see Correspondence (1935), II, 523, 686. Although James MacPherson introduced a harp with aeolian properties into his "translations" — see Fingal (1762), Book VI, p. 74; Temora (1763), Book VII, p. 121; Carthon (1762), p. 132; Berrathon (1762), p. 267 — his bardic descriptions indicate as a likely source, the Psalmist's lament during the Babylonian

captivity (Psalm 137).

Nor was interest confined purely to poetic representations. Sir John Hawkins — General History, IV, 218-20 — corroborated Kircher's investigations, and Benjamin Stillingfleet in his Principles and Power of Harmony (1771) developed a theory of harmonics founded on aeolian formularies (pp. 107-9). Matthew Young, Bishop of Clonfert, similarly discussed the wind harp in An Enquiry into . . . Musical Strings (1784), pp. 170-82, and William Jones deemed the instrument of sufficient import to incorporate it into his Physiological Disquisitions (1781), pp. 338-45. The continuation of musical curiosity is shown by James Beattie's essay On Poetry and Music (1762), in which, somewhat surprisingly, the author related that an aeolian harp threw an unfortunate listener into "a feverish fit" (p. 456).

More to be expected were the findings of Joseph Cox, who, in his Practical Observations on Insanity (1804), remarked that "the varied modulations, the lulling, soothing chords of . . . an Eölian harp have appeased contending passions, allayed miserable feeling, and afforded ease and tranquillity to the bosom tortured with real or fancied woe" (p. 62). Swift devoted Section VIII of his satire A Tale of a Tub (1704) to ridicule of Aeolists, who "maintain the Original Cause of all Things to be Wind" (p. 146), and in the field of novelistic fiction, Smollett characterized aeolian charms with some exuberance: Ferdinand Count Fathom (1753), I, 250-53.

Interest in the aeolian harp was not confined to England; in Germany, especially, the emergence of the Aeolusharfe corresponded, chronologically, to the period of the Gothic vogue. On one level the elusive, incorporeal associations of the instrument prompted such fanciful essays as J.F.H. von Dalberg's Die Aeolsharfe. Ein Allegorischer Traum (1801). On another, its physical properties continued to excite attention, as J.S.T. Gehler, Physikalisches Wörterbuch, V (1799), 12-13, or G.C. Lichtenberg, "Von der Äolus-Harfe" (1792). Yet again, its final transmutation into an archetypal symbol of the romantic era was foreshadowed by Goethe's "Zueignung" to Faust, in which the poet addresses figments of his imaginative past: "Es schwebet nun in unbestimmten Tönen/ Mein lispelnd Lied, der Äolsharfe gleich" (ll. 27-28); note also his poem "Äolsharfen". In France la harpe éolienne enjoyed patronage by Châteaubriand — see Les Natchez (1827), I, 111 — and the most comprehensive account to date of its genesis, construction and literary influence was that contained in Georges Kastner's La Harpe d'Éole et la Musique Cosmique (pp. 51-88) which appeared in Paris in 1856.

By the turn of the century poets not only drew from the aeolian harp a sense-stimulus (allied to the physical phenomenon of air movement), but they began to perceive in the mysterious chording an apt metaphor for spontaneous creative energies: in short, an analogue for the poetic mind.

Although the harp still provided a subject for descriptive flights — Robert Bloomfield's Nature's Music (1808) transcribed many such extracts and poetical tributes, and he himself penned a short lyric "Aeolus" (Remains, I, 62-63) — its "inner voice" seemed to objectify the delicate workings of the primary imagination. For the aeolian music made tangible, not the order and logic of discursive reflection, but the apparently arbitrary impulses of the unconscious. As in response to the unseen instrumentalist the strings sang the uncontrived music of nature, so they expressed symbolically the passivity of that intellect "played upon" by free associations.

S.T. Coleridge's blank-verse poem "The Eolian Harp" (1795) — Poetical Works, I, 100-2 — which remains, as Geoffrey Grigson has suggested, the "locus classicus of the harp" ("Harp of Aeolus", p. 24), was composed by the poet on reading Cudworth's True Intellectual System (Coleridge's phrase "plastic nature" provides an obvious link with Cudworth's thesis). But Coleridge developed the conceit further into a metaphor through which the dualism of man and nature could be explored, and returned to this idea in "The Snow-drop" (1800 [1798]) — Poetical Works, I, 356-58 — and again, in Dejection: An Ode (1802) — Poetical Works, I, 362-68 — the latter his most mature statement of man's psyche interpreted in relation to aeolian imagery. In Dejection, however, he was to abandon the wind harp as a symbol for "external" creative spontaneity, in favour of

the mind as an instrument of vast compass governed by the dictates of "inner" genius: this relinquishment is stated explicitly in his marginalia on Kant.

As expressive of the vision of ideal generative fruition, then, the figuration of the aeolian harp with its ceaseless ebb and flow, influenced a generation of poets from about 1800 to 1850. As Erika von Erhardt-Siebold suggests, "All the peculiar romantic longings for seismic response, for the whole gamut of a sense-impression, for pleasing melancholy, vague unsubstantialized sounds and 'Nature all above the reach of art' found their complete fulfilment in the Aeolian music" ("Some Inventions of the Pre-Romantic Period", p. 358). To some eulogizers the instrument proved little more than a timely symbol through which metaphors of untutored nature could conveniently be channelled; the fashion for owning a harp as a decorative ornament undoubtedly encouraged such an attitude.

But other imagistic possibilities inhered in the wind harp, chief among which was its capacity to convey the sensitive and elusive character of poetic inspiration. In his Essay on Christianity (1815) Shelley wrote of a "Power by which we are surrounded, like the atmosphere in which some motionless lyre is suspended, which visits with its breath our silent chords at will": Literary Criticism, p. 90. And again, "Man is an instrument over which a series of external and internal impressions are driven, like the alternations of an ever-changing wind over an Aeolian lyre": A Defence of Poetry

(1821), p. 121. Although Shelley's is the most refined expression of this concept, Keats (Endymion, Lamia), Wordsworth (The Prelude, [1805] I, ll. 101-9) and Hazlitt (On Poetry in General (1818)) among many, incorporate aeolian metonymy within their literary and philosophical designs.

It was in conjunction with early nineteenth-century poetic insights that the aeolian harp attained its most memorable form. As Nature became divested of her mystical aura, and as analysis rather than speculation came to provide an entrance into the creative faculty, so aeolian metaphors proved less expedient in expressing new literary vogues. The instrument's final metamorphosis recalled that educated curiosity which had greeted its invention two hundred years earlier, for by 1900 it survived only as a musical relic from a bygone era.

APPENDIX III SMART'S PSALM SETTINGS

Towards the close of his second confinement Smart had prayed for "a musician or musicians to set the new psalms" (Jubilate Agno, D. 217): an invocation that reflected his sadly-frustrated hopes for the distribution and employment of his 1765 poetic version. But Smart's prayer was answered in one obvious sense with the publication of "A Collection of Melodies for the Psalms of David, According to the Version of Christopher Smart, A.M. By the most Eminent Composers of Church Music. London. Printed for I. Walsh in Catharine Street in the Strand". The Collection bore no date or imprint and was commonly, though erroneously, assigned to [1768?] by earlier twentieth-century authorities, and also designated a folio edition. W. Barclay Squire, for instance, who compiled the Catalogue of Printed Music Published Between 1487 and 1800 Now in the British Museum (1912), followed both assertions in this classification, and in his later Catalogue of the King's Music Library (1929), also produced under British Museum auspices. The Melodies in fact, appeared in 1765, and this fact is naturally recorded in all standard catalogue entries dating from around 1930.

First intimation of the Melodies' existence was given in The Public Advertiser, No. 9626 for 8 July 1765. Following notice of the Psalms' forthcoming circulation on 12 August, a postscript stated that "Shortly will be published, Music to the above Work" and solicited subscriptions for the same [fol. 4].

Identical advertisements for the Melodies were reprinted in further numbers for 11 July (No. 9576, [sic] [fol. 3]) and 14 August (No. 9604, [fol. 3]), and the work was actually launched on 23 October. The Public Advertiser, No. 9665 for this date announced on its title page [fol. 1]: "This Day is published . . . A Collection of Melodies for the Psalms of David; according to the Version of Christopher Smart, A.M.", and reproduced the same paragraph in subsequent issues for 29 October (No. 9670 [fol. 3]) and 31 October (No. 9672, [fol. 4]). A Bibliography of the Musical Works Published by . . . John Walsh during the years 1721-66, compiled by William C. Smith and Charles Humphries, records the appearance of the Collection on 23 October (p.276, entry 1233).

John Walsh, the Younger, who undertook preparation of the Melodies, succeeded his father, John Walsh, the Elder, as the most eminent music publisher of his day. He continued business (publishing and sale of instruments) at the same premises of "The Harp and Hautboy" in Catherine (Catharine) Street in the Strand from 1736 to 1766. The firm's high standing is attested to by the quality of printed works, and both father and son specialized in disseminating the compositions of Handel: see Otto Erich Deutsch, Handel (1955), passim.

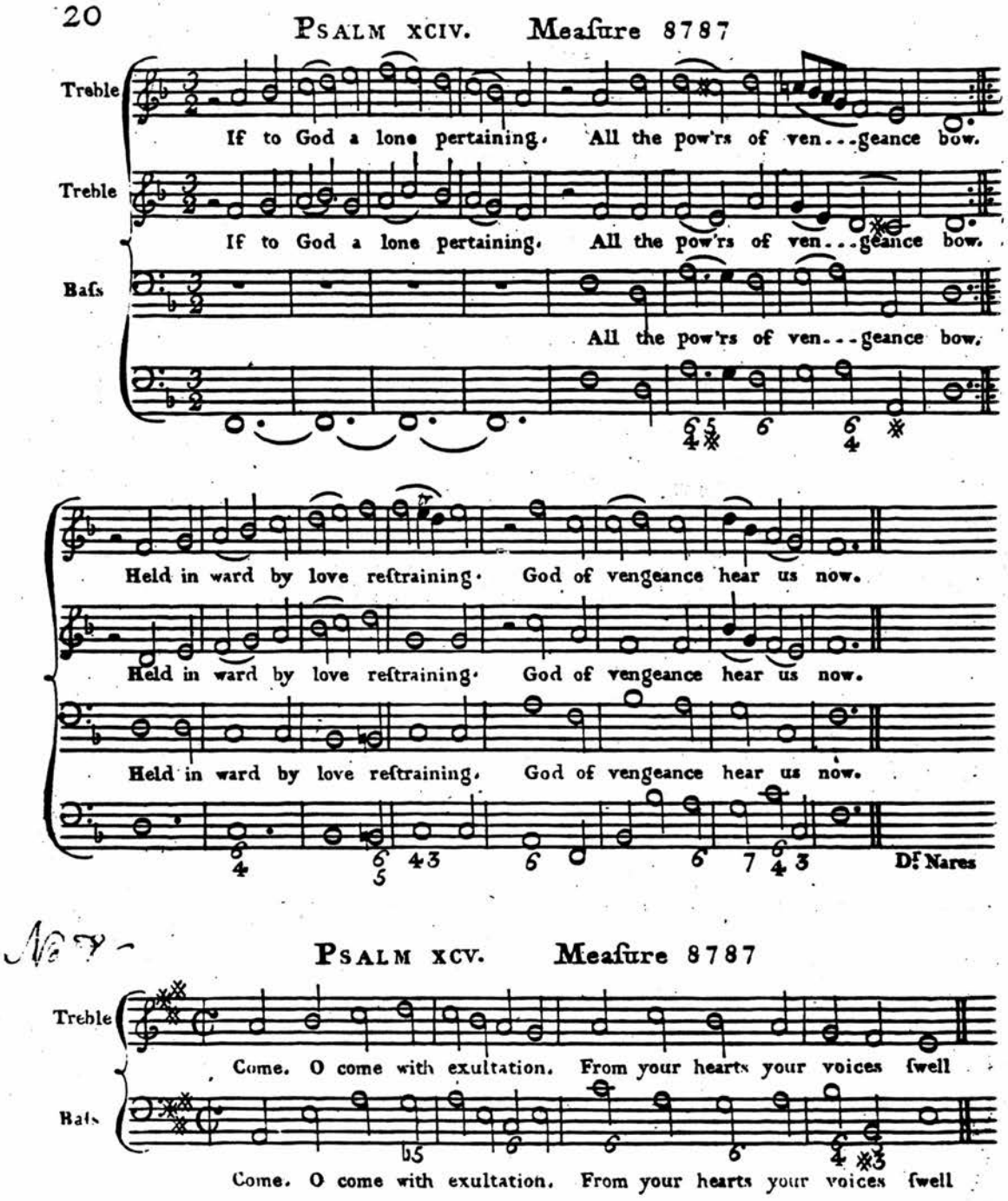
The Collection itself comprises a total of forty-five settings by twelve different contributors, who were indeed among the "most Eminent Composers of Church Music" of their age. The musicians so distinguished are as follows, together

with the number of arrangements by which each is represented: Samuel Howard (11); William Boyce (6); James Nares (6); George Berg (4); John Bennett (3); John Stanley (3); Samuel Long (3); Benjamin Cooke (3); John Randall (2); Joseph Baildon (2); Edmund Ayrton (1); Thomas Wood (1). (Arthur Sherbo, it might be noted (Christopher Smart, p. 201), omits the name of John Bennett from his listing, and nominates Edmund Ayrton as "Edmund Aston".) Grove contains entries for Howard, Boyce, Nares, Bennett, Stanley, Cooke, Randall, Baildon and Ayrton, and the DNB assigns paragraphs to Howard, Boyce, Nares, Stanley, Cooke, Randall and Ayrton. Notwithstanding some minor biographical discrepancies between Grove and the DNB, it is indisputable that these eighteenth-century figures held, at one time or another, virtually every prime organist's appointment in London (Randall, of course, was resident at King's College, Cambridge, at which university he set Gray's Ode to Music).

The settings, however, are generally unremarkable, with little to distinguish them from the plethora of similar mid-century psalm tunes. The majority consist of a melody over a figured bass; others are harmonized in three or four parts and incorporate canonic imitation, but evidently they were intended principally for congregational singing. Some soprano flourishes reflect the prevailing operatic conventions; the idiosyncratic settings of Nares, for instance, form short, florid motets, and display the

corresponding freedom that this form allows (see Illus. XXIV a,b). Occasional awkwardnesses of line would limit their application to mass worship, and the most effective arrangements are probably the simplest, as Boyce's settings of Psalms III and IV. One matter of textual note in the Melodies is that page 13 constitutes a blank recto; the music and text, however, are continuous. All extant copies reproduce this same pagination, and no further states or impressions succeeded the initial printing of the first (and only) edition.

It has been commonly asserted that the distinction of the composers represented by the Melodies testified to Smart's prominence in London musical circles and to his ability to retain reputable patronage during long periods of instability. Such a statement is certainly applicable to the Psalms subscribers, who, as critics have painstakingly demonstrated, were indeed drawn from an impressively wide-ranging sector of Augustan society. Yet even here, and notwithstanding the genuine and selfless efforts of Smart's acquaintances to promote his Translation, a sense of obligation, rectitude or mere curiosity would certainly have informed some of his benefactors' assurances. As for the Collection, anthologies of this kind were commonplace in the eighteenth century and provided a ready means of publication for the composers concerned; to describe the contributors as intimates of the writer is, at best, indeterminate, and at present, unproven. One obvious link is provided by James Nares, to whom Smart



Illus. XXIVa. A Collection of Melodies (1765), p.20 [reduced].

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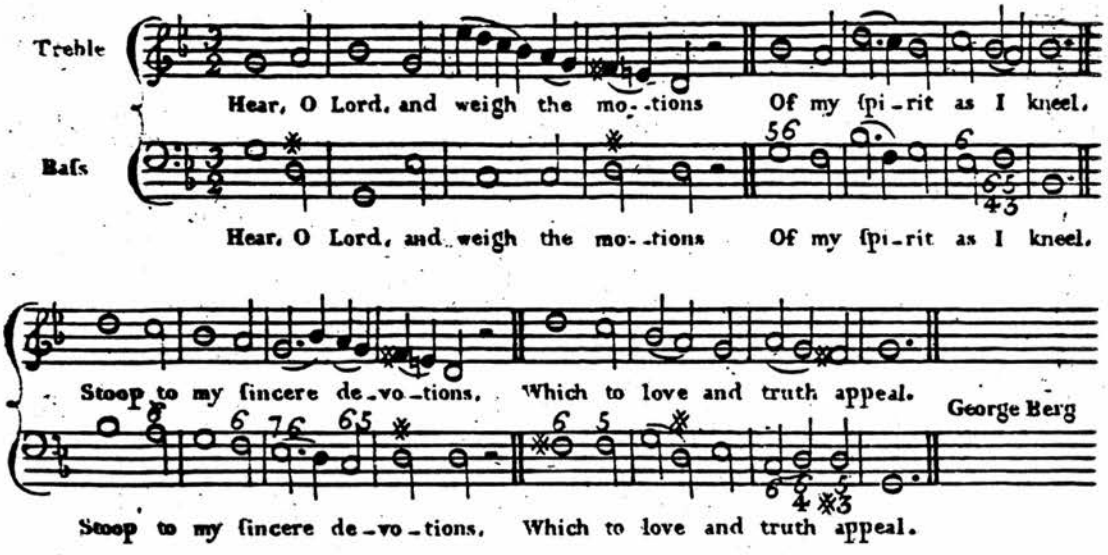
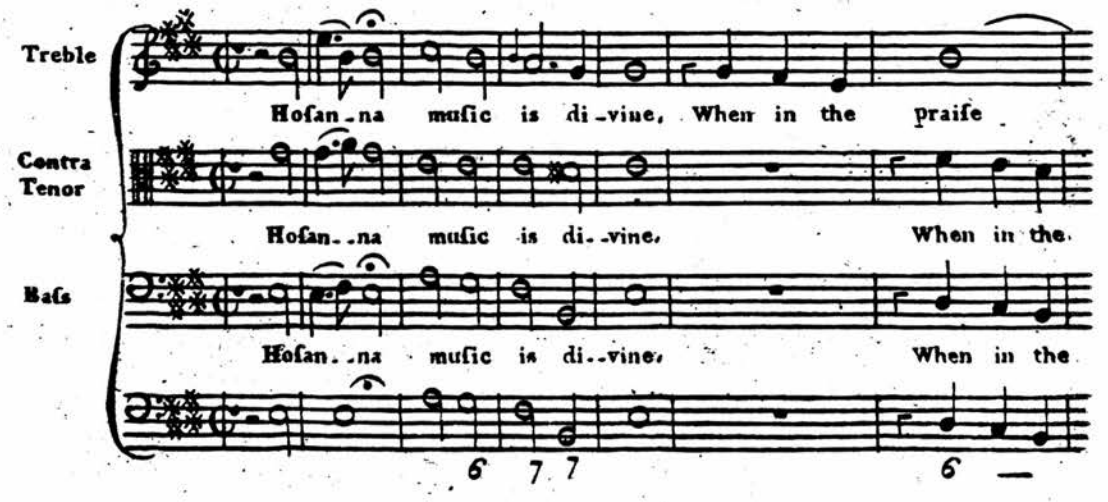
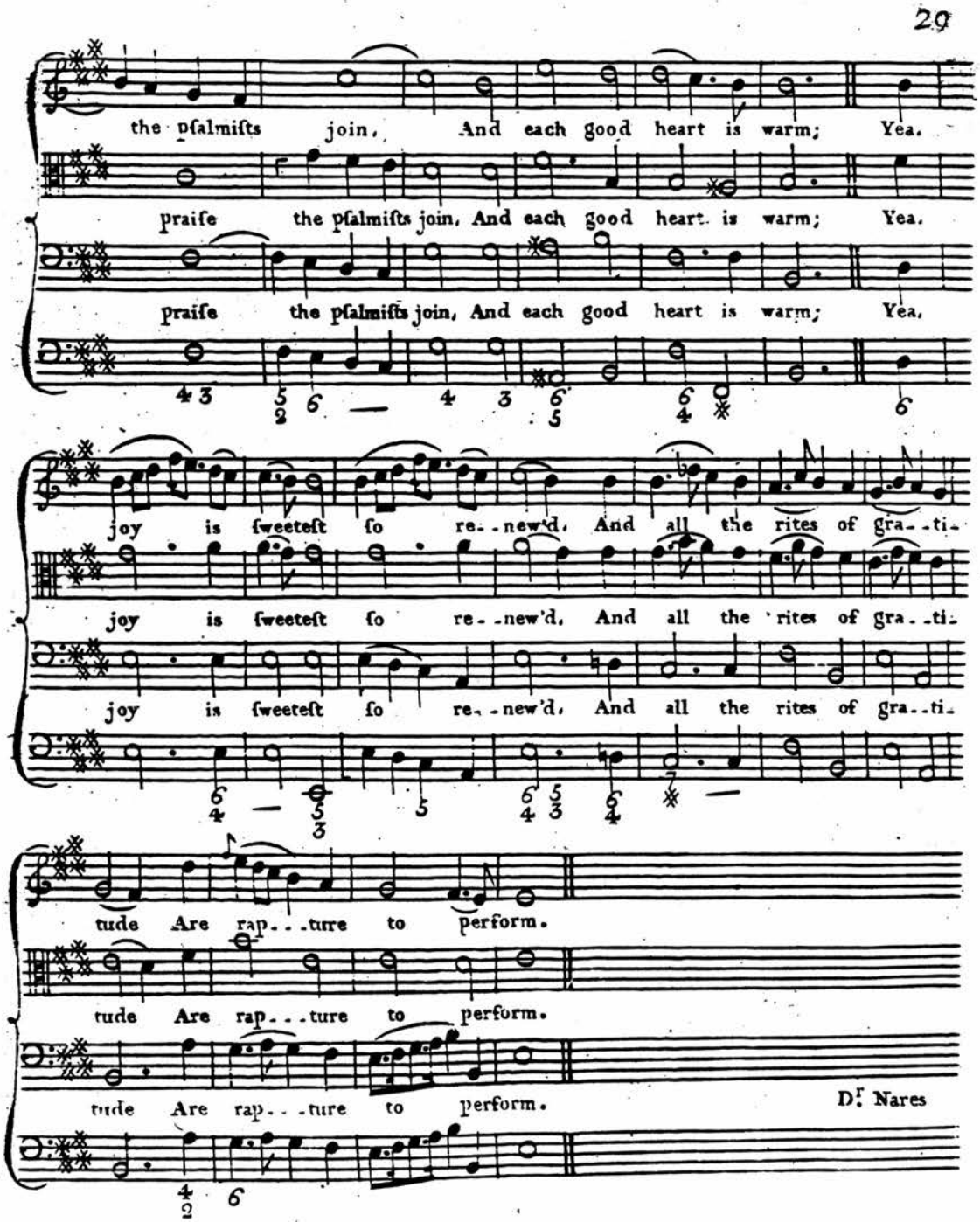
PSALM CXLIII. Meaſure 8787



PSALM CXLVII. Meaſure 886886



Illus. XXIVb. A Collection of Melodies (1765), pp.28, 29 [reduced].



Illus. XXIVb contd.

addressed a witty verse invitation, and another by Charles Burney, who, as we have already seen, "remained his [Smart's] last and most generous friend" — Madame D'Arblay, Memoirs (1832), I, 280 — and who may well have instigated the Melodies. Burney's close involvement in the contemporary musical world is in no doubt, although his inter-relationship with Smart's collaborators is less well documented: see Roger Lonsdale, Dr. Charles Burney (1965), passim.

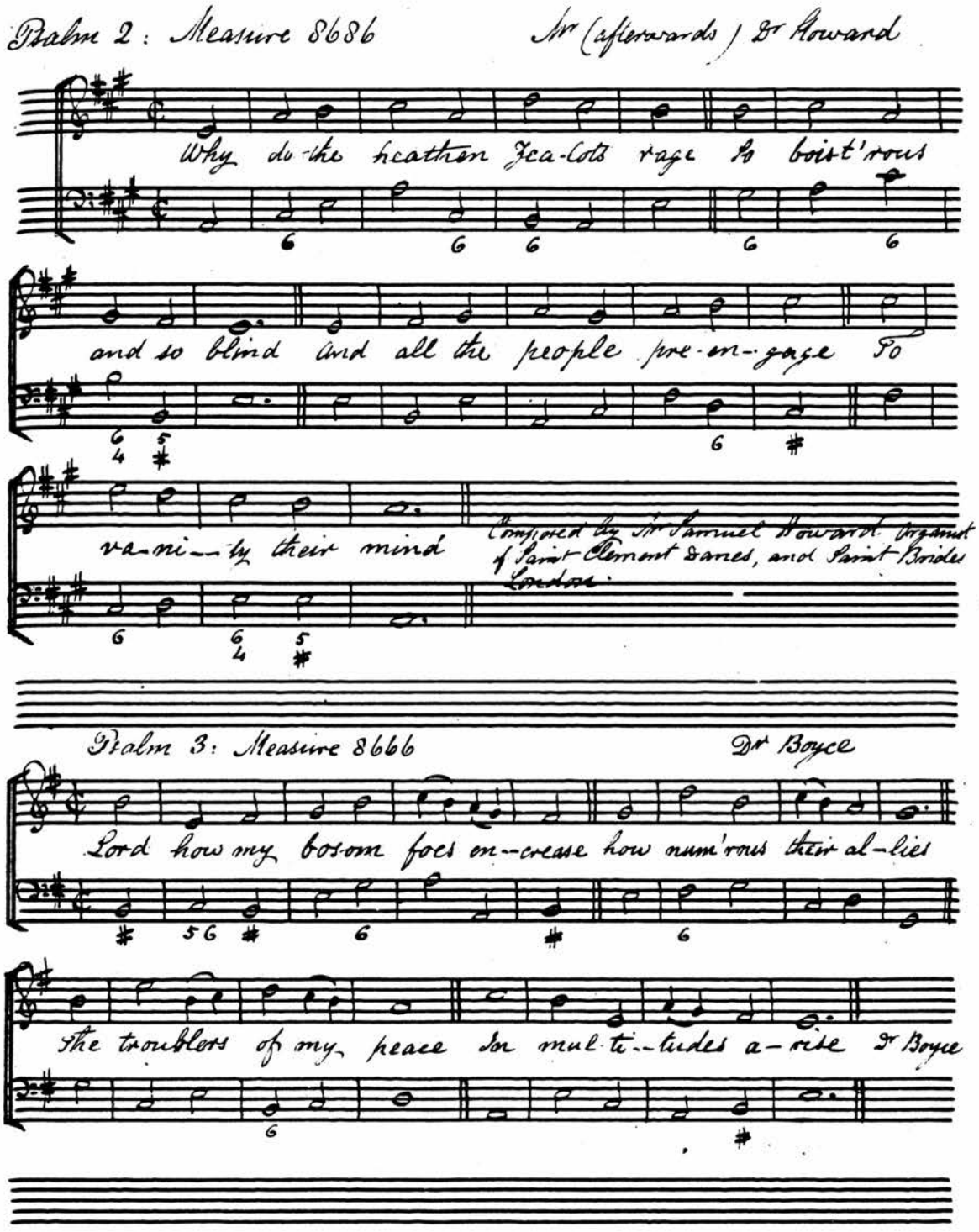
A speculative corollary to the 1765 edition was proposed in a letter appearing in TLS for 15 October 1938 (p.661) in which the writer, E.G. Ainsworth, drew attention to a MS copy of the Melodies held in the National Library of Scotland archives. The item in question is bound into the quarto edition of Smart's Translation of the Psalms (1765), and catalogued under the pressmark, Cwn. 725. The substance of Ainsworth's letter was to impute transcription of the hand-written MS to Smart himself, thereby claiming for the poet a greater technical proficiency in music than had hitherto been recognized. This conjecture was countered by J.[ames] H. L.[oudon], a N.L.S. Assistant, who, having examined the MS in some detail, had discovered a major obstacle to Ainsworth's assertions: namely, that some sheets bore a nineteenth-century watermark.

The MS is hand-written throughout in black ink, and bears the same title (punctuation excepted) as the printed edition of 1765. The watermark S E V A N S & C ^{O} / 1 8 3 7 appears

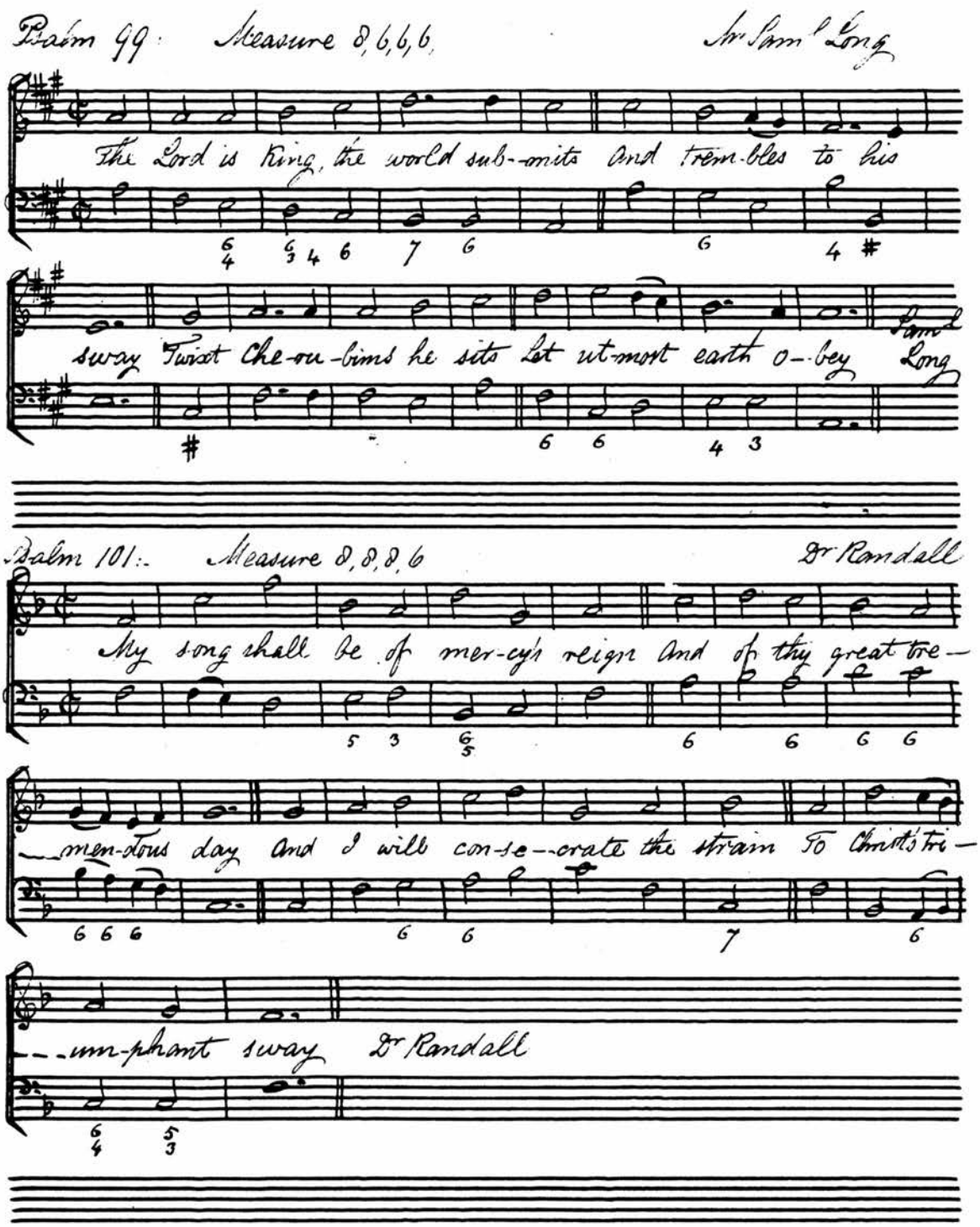
on leaves 3, 4, 8, 10, 15 and 16; as this identification refers to the mould, and not necessarily to the paper, the sheets could not have been penned prior to 1837 (Smart died in 1771). Moreover, neither the musical notation nor the handwriting is consistent with mid-eighteenth-century practice (see Illus.XXVa,b); together they indicate the years 1830 to 1850 as the most likely compositional period.

The physical position of the MS in relation to the Psalms was presumably a strong contributory factor in Ainsworth's supposition, for the Melodies follow immediately on the Song (2nd edition), and their nineteen partially-numbered leaves are cut to the same dimensions as the quarto Psalms. The absence of a separate pressmark for the MS indicates that the work was received by the N.L.S. as one bound volume: part of the Cowan Bequest, gifted in 1929 by William Cowan, editor of the Church Hymnary (1898) and of The Bibliography of the Book of Common Order and Psalm Book of the Church of Scotland, 1556-1644 (1913). As the N.L.S. would not conjoin a MS with a printed item, it seems likely that the hand-written Melodies were incorporated into the 1765 Psalms during Cowan's ownership. There is no mention made either of Smart's Psalms, or of the settings, in William Cowan and James Love, The Music of the Church Hymnary and the Psalter in Metre (1901).

A detailed comparison of the two versions, Cwn. 725 and Cwn. 713 (A Collection of Melodies (Walsh)), reveals variants that are wholly accidental. In essence the MS transcriber



Illus. XXVa. A Collection of Melodies (MS), p.2 [reduced]. N.L.S. Cwn.725.



Illus. XXVb. A Collection of Melodies (MS), p.15 [reduced]. N.L.S. Cwn.725.

has corrected certain figurations in the printed text, has occasionally altered the implied harmonies and has modernized some specifically eighteenth-century notational practices. This is the work of a trained musician; irrefutable textual evidence apart, it is quite misleading to believe that Smart would have possessed the requisite expertise for such a specialized task. It is fitting, however, that the association of Smart's Psalms with their accompanying tunes should be deemed of sufficient import to have led to their preservation in this form.

APPENDIX IV "FANNY, BLOOMING FAIR"

In the opening chapter to this thesis, John Hawkins's ascription of "Fanny, Blooming fair" to William Boyce was quoted by way of confirming the composer's identity. To cite the relevant passage again: "Many yet remember the elegant air to which he set the song of Lord Chesterfield's, addressed to Lady Frances Shirley "When Fanny, blooming fair" . . .". But if Hawkins's testimony resolves one dilemma, it raises another, and one with more far-reaching ramifications. For the catalogue entry to Text A [see footnote, page 93] reads: [Words by T. Phillips, music by W. Boyce.], and further notes, presumably in reference to Hawkins's Memoirs: "This song was written on Lady Fanny Shirley — It has been erroneously attributed to Lord Chesterfield". But "Fanny, Blooming fair" is printed in the second volume of The Poems, of the Late Christopher Smart (1791); it is reprinted in Callan's edition of 1949 (I, 130-31), accepted by Brittain (Poems, p.9 n.7) and Dearnley (Poetry of Smart, p.13), and also by Sherbo in his standard biography of 1967 (pp. 20-21).

What does seem certain is that Smart translated the poem into Latin, probably in 1738, the year before he entered Pembroke Hall, Cambridge. His facility in versifying dates from his time at Durham School, and in 1740, at age eighteen, he was elected to write the Tripos Verses for the first time,

an honour which he subsequently repeated in 1741 and 1742. His Latin translation of "Fanny, Blooming fair" was printed in The Gentleman's Magazine of 1754 and signed "C.S. AEtat. 16" (Vol. XXIV (April 1754), 185). [Smart was born in 1722.] Sherbo assumes — understandably, in view of its several reprintings — that the original was also by Smart, and penned in 1738, "or shortly before. The poem is astonishingly good of its kind, considering Smart's tender years . . . . " (Christopher Smart, loc. cit.). To my knowledge this assumption has never been questioned, and nor has the existence of the Boyce setting actually been noted.

If a published copy of "Fanny, Blooming fair" could be found within the canon of Thomas Phillips, it would not be difficult to conjecture its presence in Hunter's 1791 edition, which comprised "[Smart's] Prize Poems, Odes, Sonnets, and Fables, Latin and English Translations; together with many original compositions, not included in the Quarto Edition" (title page). A copy of the original poem was most likely discovered in Smart's papers, to which his nephew [Hunter] had access in compiling his volumes, either in close proximity to, or in parallel text with, the Latin rendition. The only traceable extant work by Phillips is Love and Glory: a Masque [later Britannia] in one act and verse, which was set by Arne and produced as an afterpiece to The Silent Woman at Drury Lane on 21 March 1734. The music has apparently been lost, though the text was published separately in London in the same year.

The fact of Phillips's authorship of "Fanny, Blooming fair" may be deduced, however, from an advertisement to a performance of another of his works, The Rival Captains, which was staged at the New Haymarket Theatre on 26 May 1736. This notice, which is reproduced in The London Stage 1660-1800: Part 3, p.588, informs us that the serenata was "Written by the Author of . . . When Fanny, Blooming Fair". In the face of this statement, that Phillips did indeed pen the verses, seems indisputable.

The evidence by which authorship has been credited to Smart seems, in any case, precarious. If the B.L. conjectural dating of Texts A and B is accurate, then Smart would have only been thirteen or fourteen at the time of composition. The language of "The Ravish'd Lover" seems scarcely creditable from the mind and pen of a sixteen-year-old. But the poem is exactly what the young Smart might have seized upon to display his linguistic virtuosity, as he was to do a few years later with Pope's Ode on Saint Cecilia's Day. Secondly, the designation of "Fanny" is explicit rather than generic ("Phyllis" or "Chloe"); and there is nothing to suggest that Smart was acquainted with a lady of that name. At this time his attentions were directed towards Anne Vane, who formed the subject of some early poems, and who is fondly recalled in Jubilate Agno (B2.534; D.186). And lastly, any possibility of the young Boyce in London receiving copy from a schoolboy in Durham, seems highly improbable. It is more reasonable to continue to maintain that 1744 or 1745 was the year in which Smart's artistic ventures first came to general attention.

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VIII. MUSIC

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